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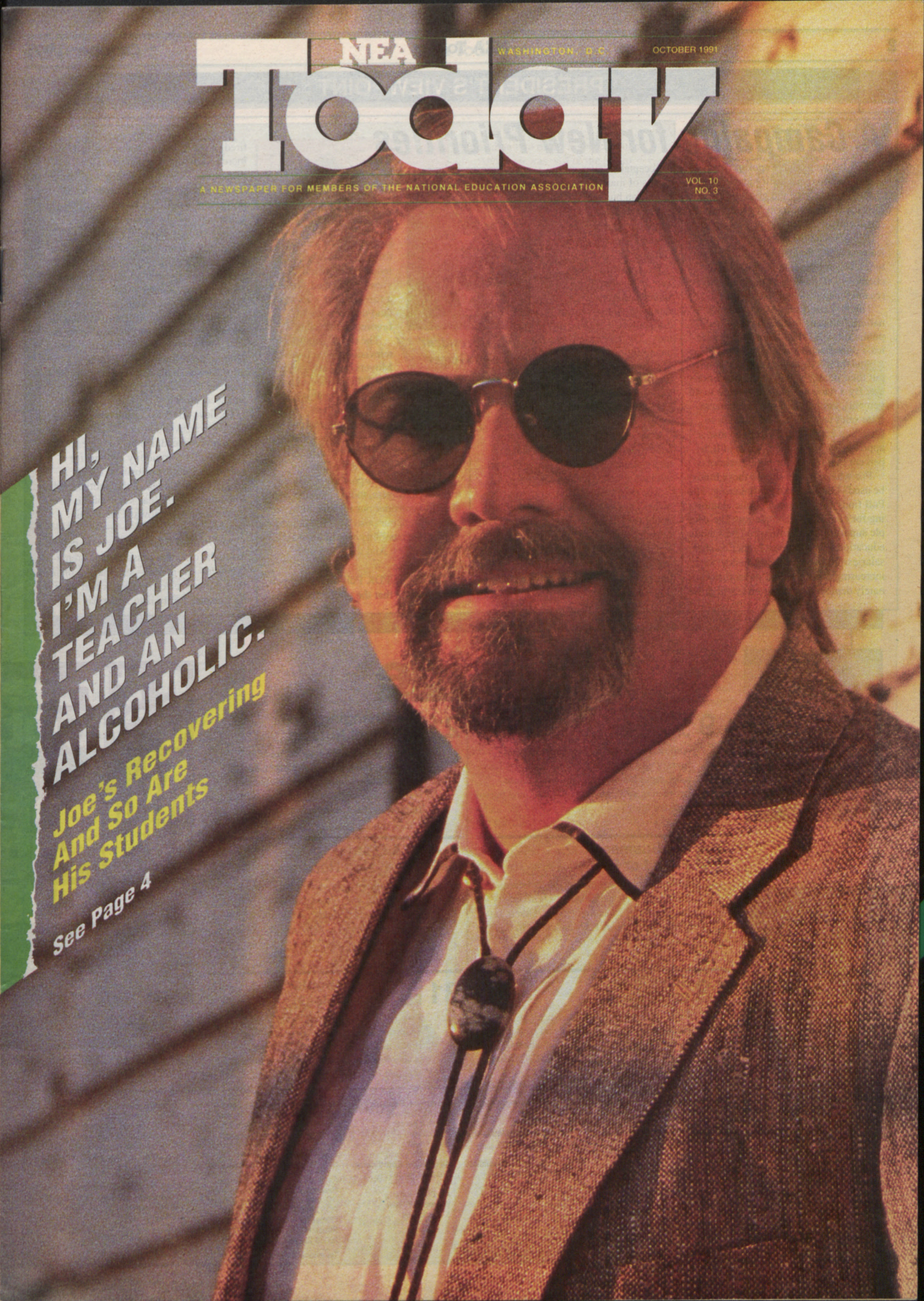

HI, MY NAME IS JOE. I'M A TEACHER AND AN ALCOHOLIC.

Joe's Recovering And So Are His Students

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

A Campaign for New Priorities

The people have spoken. And their voices testify anew to the good sense and good will that flourish at the grassroots level of American society.

The 23rd annual Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa (PDK) Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools is chock-full of findings that give us all reason for hope—and for pride.

The Poll results tell us that our nation's citizens believe in America's public schools. They believe in America's public school employees.

And they believe the time has come to put their money where their convictions are: By a wide margin (55 percent to 40 percent), the public favors a 1 percent state sales tax devoted exclusively to financing education. The public also approves of a state income tax of 0.5 percent earmarked for public schools.

For what purpose should these funds be used? Certainly not for tinkering. The Poll finds the American public clamoring for comprehensive change. The people support publicly financed preschool education. They support higher teacher salaries. They oppose expediency: increasing class size and indiscriminately deploying uncertified teachers are unacceptable, even as means of managing tight education budgets.

Underlying this set of beliefs is the core conviction that emerges from the Gallup/PDK Poll.

Respondents were asked to assess three sources of America's future strength—education, industry, and the military. The response was unambiguous: 90 percent of those polled said improving education is the key to America's future prosperity and security.

NEA President
Keith Geiger

In the words of the Gallup/PDK experts who analyzed the Poll results: "Americans recognize that a strong education system is fundamental to national well-being; nothing will work without a well-educated citizenry."

The people want education improvement. They're demanding it. But they doubt they'll get it. And this skepticism runs deep.

There's no denying it: We're witnessing an erosion of public confidence in our government's capacity to meet domestic challenges. We don't seem sure of ourselves. Pessimism is rising.

Why this cynical streak? That's a tough question. Maybe it's because we've endured, for nearly three years, a federal administration that views the United States as a foreign land—a foreign land undeserving of favored nation status.

The result, according to television journalist Bill Moyers, is that "we're creating a future of diminished expectations." In the process, we're also "creating a society unfit for children."

Moyers takes note of the writings of America's founders—writings that repeatedly invoke the ideal of public policy that advances the welfare of "ourselves and our posterity." By contrast, says Moyers, today's leaders seem afraid to consider our responsibility to our children, our posterity. To take stock of that responsibility would be to face tough choices. And that's become unfashionable.

The Gallup/PDK Poll offers compelling evidence that the public has grown tired of this timidity. Americans are increasingly worried that while the President talks of a new world order, disorder sweeps our home. Recessionary forces bring pain to millions, even as billions of dollars are sent to defend European nations no longer threatened by the disunified Soviet Union. The nation that freed the Kuwaiti people from foreign tyranny appears unable to free its own people from domestic misery.

With their answers to this year's Gallup/PDK Poll, Americans seem to be saying it's time to put our own house in order. They're demanding new priorities. They're protesting our government's refusal to make the domestic investments we need to ensure our future prosperity and security. They're calling for help.

I believe our Association has a responsibility to answer this call. That's why, in the months ahead, I'll be asking each of you to enlist community support for a campaign for new priorities. I'll be asking you to galvanize the political will so evident in this year's Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward the Public Schools.

Above all, I'll be asking you to help make the case that pessimism is premature. We—the people—can make it plain to America's elected officials that their first responsibility is to America.

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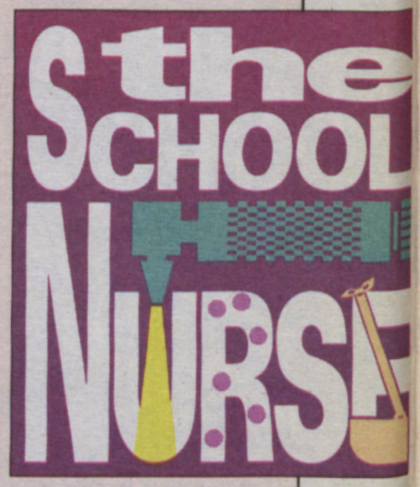

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NATIONAL NEWS

It's been more than a year and a half since the governors adopted—and President Bush endorsed—the six National Education Goals. What's happened since?

In September 1989, President Bush called the National Governors' Association—composed of all the nation's governors—to a special education summit in Charlottesville, Virginia.

"The time has come," says an official statement from summit participants, "for the first time in U.S. history, to establish clear, national performance goals—goals that will make us internationally competitive."

"Today, a new standard for an educated citizenry is required, one suitable for the next century," the governors and the President noted. "All of our people, not just a few, must be able to think for a living, to adapt to changing environments, and to understand the world around them....They must continually learn and develop new skills throughout their lives."

On the heels of the summit, the governors adopted six national goals. By the year 2000, if these goals are met:

- all children will start school healthy and ready to learn.
- the performance of American students on international math and science achievement tests will rank first in the world.
- the dropout rate will be down to 10 percent.
- all adult Americans will be functionally literate.
- students will display competence in challenging subject matter.
- all schools will be safe, disciplined, and drug-free.

Several months after the education summit, the National Governors' Association and President Bush appointed a National Goals Panel to monitor our country's progress in reaching the goals.

Six governors (three Republicans, three Democrats) sit on the Panel: John Ashcroft (Missouri), Evan Bayh (Indiana), Terry Branstad (Iowa), Carroll Campbell, Jr. (South Carolina), Booth Gardner (Washington), and Roy Romer (Colorado).

The other Panel members come from the Bush Administration: Secretary of Education Lamar Alexandar, Office of Management and Budget Director Richard Darman, Assistant to the President for Economic and Domestic Policy Roger Porter, and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu.

Seven months ago, the Panel began to tackle the issue of how best to assess whether the goals are being met. Chair Romer appointed resource groups of 8-10 "expert" educators. His charge to the groups: Recommend potential indicators and measurement strategies.

NEA members Len Anderson, a high school teacher-librarian from Portland, Oregon, and Donna Foglia, a kindergarten teacher from San Jose, California, served on two of the resource groups.

Anderson was part of the group assigned to Goal Six, drug-free and safe schools.

His group recommended surveying students and staff about drug use, suspected drug use, and assaults in their schools. The group did ascertain that there's not so much actual drug use in schools as there are students affected by drugs.

The Panel used the group recommendations as a basis for eight regional forums held across the country.

Some 3,000 people—education experts; local, state, and federal officials; the public at large—participated in those forums. More than 500 people also submitted written testimony. Much of the input came from Association officers at state and local levels.

Speaking for NEA was Secretary-Treasurer Marilyn Monahan, who testified at a Panel hearing in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Monahan stressed how important it is for the Panel to deal with inputs as well as outcomes.

She expressed the Association's concern that the Panel seemed to be focusing on results—like test scores—without considering the resources and programs necessary to achieve success.

Monahan advised the Panel to look at factors—like class size and funding—that help determine outcomes, rather than just monitor what was happening in the schools.

In the end, the Panel adopted predominately outcome-oriented measures for each goal. But it did reject the notion of a single, standardized paper-and-pencil test in favor of setting national standards in each of the six core curriculums.

The Panel's idea is that once standards are in place, states—or groups of states—can develop ways to determine whether those standards are being met.

To advance this approach, Congress recently passed legislation creating the Interim Council on Standards and Assessment.

It's the Council's job to develop a methodology or process for arriving at standards for each of the core curriculums. NEA President Keith Geiger serves on the Council.

As *NEA Today* went to press, the National Goals Panel was due to issue its first annual report card to the nation on progress toward the goals.

The report was to have two parts: the first would contain indicators to gauge each state's progress toward the goals, and the second would deal with subobjectives.

Report cards will be coming from the Panel and the governors each of the next several years on the anniversary of the Education Summit.

Not only will the reports keep us informed on our country's progress toward achieving the national goals, they'll also reaffirm the commitment our nation's governors made in Charlottesville two years ago.

—Diane Dismuke

"Enhancing and equalizing educational opportunity for all Americans will require providing comparable resources—financial and personnel."

—NEA Secretary Treasurer Marilyn Monahan

WILL THE NATION MEET ITS EDUCATION GOALS?

"We need to know the extent of drug abuse and violence in our schools before we can find solutions to these problems."

—Portland NEA member Len Anderson

HEROES & ZEROES

Our humbled hats off to **Virgie Hutchinson** who recently retired after 66—count 'em—66 years of teaching school in Texas. Hutchinson, 84, taught in Hunt County, Merritt County, and Austin, public and private school, mostly first grade, from 1925 to 1991. Although she'd like to continue teaching, a broken hip has forced her to rest on her hard-earned laurels.

Has Hutchinson set a teaching longevity record? Write to *NEA Today* if you or someone you know taught longer.

Another Thanks-for-Nothing Award to the **Bush Administration.** Last spring, the Administration announced an ambitious plan to reduce children's exposure to lead.

Late this summer, Administration officials told reporters that the federal government will pass the job—but probably not the bucks—to state and local governments.

According to the *New York Times*, officials from the Centers for Disease Control were set to begin cleanup efforts. But a few days before a Congressional hearing, the White House nixed any federal role in the cleanup.

Model Lawmaker of the Month: Indiana **Congressman Peter Visclosky,** who recently looked to the ISTA for expert help in planning a whirlwind tour to promote reading in his district. His appointed expert: **Linda Young**—teacher, ISTA Board member, and state political action committee member.

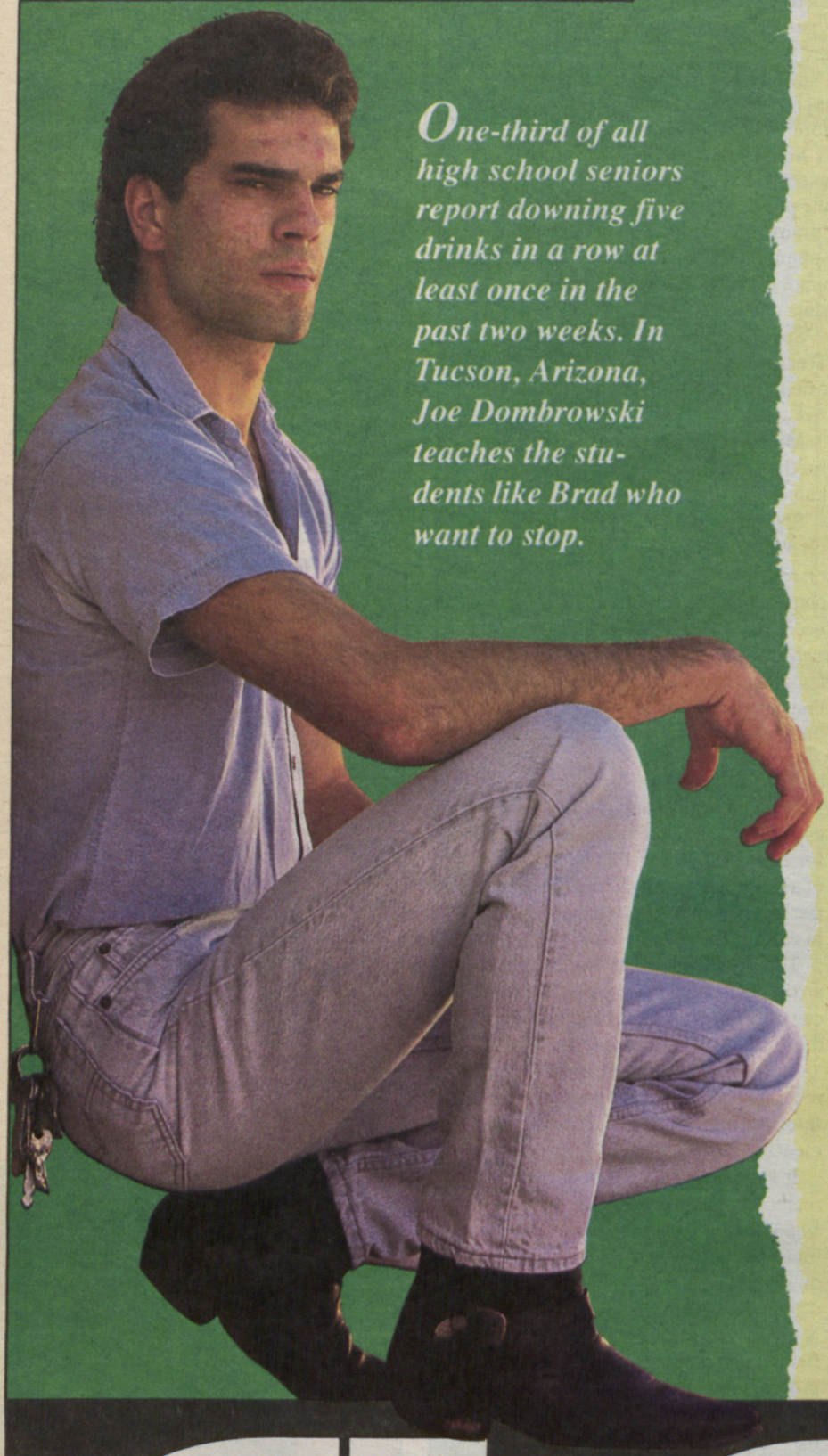
From morning to night, the two ran from one elementary school to another, to libraries, day care centers, and radio stations—reading to youngsters and promoting literacy.

The *Whose* Choice? Booby Prize goes to **Massachusetts Governor William Weld** for his style of open enrollment. A 1991 law he sponsored calls for "choice," but provides no money to transport students or help inner-city schools become schools of choice.

Republican State Senator Arthur Chase, who supports choice, says the law was "put together on the back of an envelope" and "represents choice for the few who can afford it, taken out of the hides of those who cannot."

COVER STORY

LIFESTYLES OF THE CLEAN AND



One-third of all high school seniors report downing five drinks in a row at least once in the past two weeks. In Tucson, Arizona, Joe Dombrowski teaches the students like Brad who want to stop.

"When I finally decided to quit using, I hadn't slept more than 15 hours in two months. I was hallucinating and hearing things. I'd dropped 25 pounds. I guess I was probably just about dead."

Brad (left) was 17; he'd been using everything from beer to cocaine since his older brothers turned him on to pot and alcohol at age 6.

Anita started smoking pot at 8, drinking at 12. "Right after that, I started drinking every day. At 13, I always had a beer or a bottle in my hand.

"On my 15th birthday, we all got really drunk and went racing down the Speedway." There was an accident.

"My friend Steve got killed. My lung collapsed. My spleen ruptured. They said I died twice. That scared me enough to say okay, stop."

Millions of teens are addicted to drugs and alcohol. Most don't know it, won't acknowledge it, or don't know what to do to stop it.

Most schools give them a lot of second chances, then kick them out.

Brad and Anita are among the lucky few. When they were ready to quit, their school was ready to help.

Project MORE High School sits at the dusty end of a downtown Tucson street, across from the Double D Alignment garage and a pebbly parking lot. Its windows are broken, its classrooms makeshift. Chairs and desks are scarce. Despite the beat-up building and an 18-week waiting list, students come to Project MORE from Tucson's traditional public schools, attracted by the alternative school's reputation for flexibility, caring teachers, and smaller classes.

MORE stands for More Opportunities for Relevant Education. Still, some call it the School of Last Resort. Most of the 150 or so kids who attend the 20-year-old school have, to say the least, a history of bad associations with the word *school*.

"The kids here have fallen through the cracks at other schools. The majority have drug or alcohol abuse in their families. And a lot of them use....It's kinda hard for me to look the other way."

So, in addition to music and history, Joe Dombrowski teaches a course called Lifestyles of the Clean and Sober.

Three times a week, a dozen students struggling to recover from addiction meet—on campus and for credit—to talk, support one another, and get encouragement from Joe, himself a recovering alcoholic.

"I'm coming up on five years of continuous sobriety," Joe says. "The first year, I went to 500 [Alcoholics Anonymous support] meetings. I know—and other teachers need to know—that recovering is an alcoholic's number one priority.

"A lot of students coming back from treatment facilities are falling on their butts. They need the support of a structured program more than once a week," Joe continues. "And they need the support of their peers."

Stacy was suspended 19 times from eighth grade. "They passed me anyway. I was smoking pot and drinking every day. When I got to high school, no surprise, I got suspended again. I tried to run away. I guess I was aimlessly wandering from one compulsive thought to the next."

Now 18 and a Project MORE graduate,

Alcohol: America's Drug of Choice

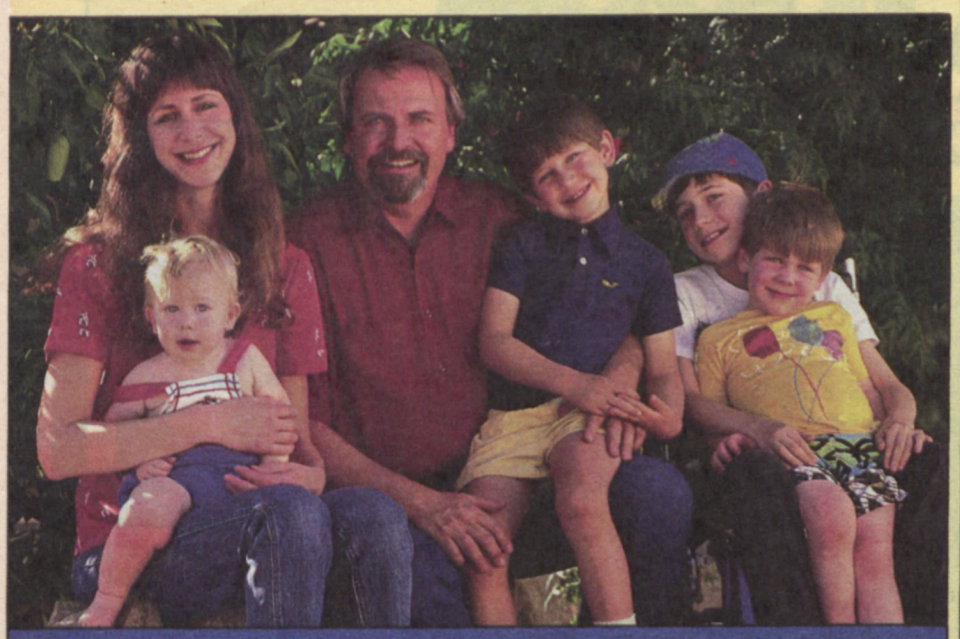
Some statistics:

- Over half of the nation's seventh through twelfth graders—10.6 million out of 20.7 million—drink.
- Eight million of these kids drink weekly, according to a recent government study; 5.4 million have had five or more drinks in a row at least once; half a million binge *once a week*.
- Of the kids who drink, 3.3 million say they drink alone; 4.4 million drink when upset; 2.7 million drink when bored.
- One of the greatest risk factors for becoming an alcoholic is to be the son, daughter, or sibling of one. Some researchers say children of alcoholics have four times the risk of alcoholism that children of non-alcoholics do.
- Before turning 18, the average child will see 75,000 drinking scenes on television programs.
- Alcohol-related traffic accidents killed 2,800 15-to-19-year-olds in 1989.

—*S.W.*

Photographs by Ken Akers

COVER STORY



Above: Joe and Bonnie Dombrowski, and their four sons. Below: a triumphant moment—Stacy's graduation.

Stacy's squeaky clean, bubbly, and savvy in the ways of addiction.

"When I got into high school, I got into coke. My mother put me in drug rehab. I got kicked out of two programs.

"I was still drinking when I signed up for Lifestyles. There were people I knew there, people I'd partied with, and they called me on my s--t. Lifestyles was a daily thing with my peers, daily reinforcement. When I made the final commitment, the group was a big support."

So was Joe. "He's really honest," Stacy says. "He's somebody I totally trust to the max. He accepts everybody. No matter what you do, he's there for you. He's not a pushover type though," she's quick to add. "You know that he really cares."

Thanks to a series of grants, Lifestyles isn't just a class. At Project MORE, Lifestyles also includes after-school sessions and social activities, a rock guitar class, and a summer support group. Wednesday nights, the parent's support network meets.

Like several other parents, Sharon is an alcoholic. "My son Bobby and I have never been close because I was practicing my disease and he was practicing his.

"I've had an abuse problem ever since I can remember," Sharon explains. "But I didn't know Bobby had an alcohol problem till he told me. There's so much denial. It's as if there's an elephant in the living room, and no one can see it."

After enrolling at Project MORE and signing up for Lifestyles, Bobby stopped drinking. Two years later, Sharon followed her son into sobriety.

Sharon's been sober for a year now. She's got a new career, is actively involved in Bobby's education, and is a regular at Project MORE.

"The Lifestyles program has made me a stronger parent. If there weren't people like Pat [the school nurse] and Joe and other parents..." she pauses, then races on. "If drug abuse isn't stopped here, it will go to my two-year-old granddaughter. I want to stop it. I want to be a support for Bobby."

"Chemical dependency is an issue of desperation," explains Pat Henry, Project MORE's school nurse, coordinator of the parents' support network, and overall social worker.

"These kids' basic needs aren't met anywhere. Of course, drugs and alcohol don't meet anyone's needs either, but they suffice for awhile.

"Lifestyles works because it's not just school. It's after-school—it's the integration between school, home life, academic life, and social life.

"It works because the kids realize they're not the only recovering kids. It gives them a new peer group. And," Henry adds, "it works because the kids see Joe as someone who's been there."

The kids themselves are experts in what doesn't work.

For two years, Brad stayed clean and sober with a lot of support from Joe and the Lifestyles group. He got his degree and a job with a local restaurant.

But sometime in the last year, he says, "I blew off the program and all my support. I'm pretty independent and stubborn, and a part of me thinks, 'I can do this by myself.' So I tried it."

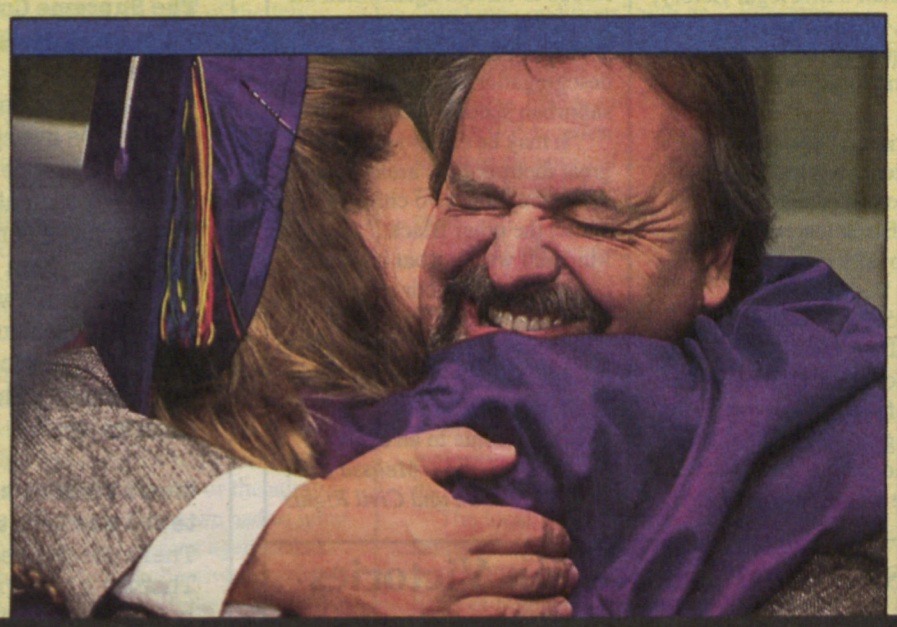
It didn't work. "I went on a binge. I couldn't deal with things anymore." Finally, Brad went for help to the one place he knew he'd feel comfortable—a Lifestyles class.

"I needed to establish that support again, to get to know people who are sober and who share my problem. And Joe's safe. When I'm with him, I'm not judged or condemned or ridiculed or conformed.

"More teachers need to recognize that people with drug or alcohol problems are people with problems, not just incorrigible little bastards who need to be corrected at some facility. We're just people who've had some pretty rough breaks.

"I'm not saying put up with our s--t. We just need to know that somebody's there for us, whether we want it or not."

—Stefanie Weiss



RESOURCES

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852
301/468-2600

"Facts About Alcohol." Single copy free; request PH106A. Many other publications available also—be specific about your interests.

U. S. Department of Education
Madeline Bosma, 202/401-3510
"Innovative Alcohol Abuse Education," a new federally funded instructional package aimed at children grades 5-8. Teacher training available soon. Call for time and place nearest you.

National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, Inc.
12 West 21st St.
New York, NY 10010
800/NCA-CALL

A computer program leads you to your local chapter. Call for free materials specifically designed for use by teens.

National Association for Children of Alcoholics
35182 Coast Hwy., Suite B
South Laguna, CA 92677
714/499-3889

Classroom packet includes information on teaching children of alcoholics, six posters, a video, fact sheets, and a literature review. Items available individually (at cost) or as package ($25, including p&h).

Talking About Alcohol: A Program for Parents of Preteens
Education Development Center, Inc.
P.O. Box 1799
Ridgely, MD 21681

Audiocassette and handbook. Available free by calling 800/732-4726.

Alcoholics Anonymous and Al-Anon
Check your phone book for the local chapter nearest you.

SOBER

HUMAN RIGHTS

Thurgood Marshall: A Titan In Education Reform

For over half a century, as a lawyer and a Supreme Court justice, Thurgood Marshall worked to make America live up to its promise of equal opportunity.

"With the retirement of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, education employees and students alike have lost a true friend and champion," NEA President Keith Geiger told reporters last month.

"Justice Marshall's moral vision and principled opinions led the nation to understand that public education is essential for the preservation of a democratic society," Geiger continued. "We will miss this just and honorable man."

Still, historians may best remember Marshall not for his 24 years on the Supreme Court, but for his role as the NAACP attorney who argued the case against school segregation before the Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

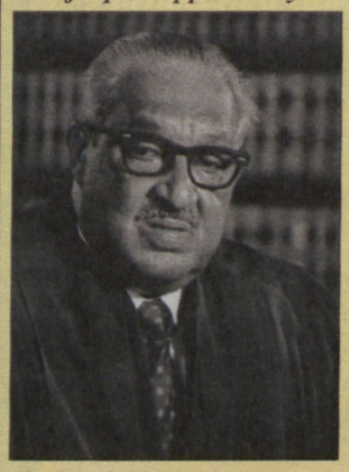
In *Brown*, the Court unanimously ruled separate educational facilities inherently unequal. The case was the apex of Marshall's long-term strategy to dismantle American institutional segregation.

District Court Judge Louis Pollak called the famous 1954 case "Thurgood Marshall's greatest triumph—assuredly the most important litigation of any kind in any court since the Civil War."

Segregation was a topic Marshall knew well. The great-grandson of a slave, he was born in 1908 to a kindergarten teacher who worked in a segregated Baltimore school and a steward who worked in an exclusive all-white club.

Marshall attended segregated Baltimore public schools, then went on to Lincoln University. He applied to the University of Maryland Law School but was rejected because of his race.

Instead, he attended Howard Law School and graduated first in his class. Marshall joined the NAACP staff, and by the time he was 30, was chief counsel of its newly created Legal Defense and Education Fund.



In the 21 years Marshall served as the legal director of the NAACP-LDEF (from 1940 to 1961), he was victorious in all but three of the 32 cases he argued before the Supreme Court.

Marshall's first legal victory, in 1935, was a particularly sweet one, requiring the University of Maryland to admit its first Black student.

During the '40s and '50s, he fought legal battles on everything from race-based salaries paid to Black teachers in Arkansas to loyalty oaths for teachers in New York.

In 1958, in *Cooper v. Aaron*, Marshall defeated Alabama Governor Orval Faubus' attempt to defy federal court orders to desegregate public schools in Little Rock.

"The single issue in the case," Marshall declared, "is whether or not a Federal District Court can delay a desegregation plan already in progress, solely because of violence or threats of violence."

The target of death threats himself, Marshall nevertheless traveled thousands of miles each year to work with isolated and harassed civil rights lawyers around the nation.

In the 1960s, Marshall served short terms as a judge on the Second Circuit Court of Appeals and as Solicitor General. In 1967, he was the first Black appointed to serve on the Supreme Court.

During his tenure on the Court, Marshall's road was a bumpy one. There were many victories for education (see box), but also many defeats.

When the Court ruled in the 1973 case, *San Antonio v. Rodriguez*, that the Constitution doesn't require equal expenditures for children's public school education, Marshall filed an eloquent dissent:

"The majority's holding can only be seen as a retreat from our historic commitment to equality of educational opportunity and as unsupportable acquiescence in a system which deprives children in their earliest years of the chance to reach their full potential as citizens."

The next year, Marshall was forced to dissent again when the Court voted 5-4 in *Milliken v. Bradley* against ordering school desegregation across Detroit and suburban school district lines.

"It may be easier to allow our great metropolitan areas to be divided up into two cities—one white, the other Black," Marshall wrote, "but it is a course, I predict, our people will ultimately regret."

"*Our* only regret," says NEA President Geiger, "is that Thurgood Marshall's term on the Court has come to an end."

—Melissa Etlin
NEA Human and Civil Rights

The Marshall Years: Major Education Victories

Thurgood Marshall and NEA were always on the same side in Supreme Court education cases. Some of the principles established follow.

► 1968: *Pickering v. Bd. of Ed.* Under the First Amendment, a teacher may not be terminated for writing a letter to the editor criticizing the school board. In this case, the teacher criticized the board for spending too much money on athletics.

► 1972: *Perry v. Sindermann* and *Bd. of Regents v. Roth*. Tenured school employees—and, in limited cases, non-tenured employees—are entitled to due process in job terminations.*

► 1974: *Lau v. Nichols*. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a school district may not refuse to provide English language instruction to foreign-language-speaking students.

► 1979: *Givhan v. Western Line Consolidated School District*. Under the First Amendment, a school district may not fire a teacher for complaining to her principal in private about the district's racially-discriminatory practices.*

► 1982: *Plyler v. Doe*. The 14th Amendment prohibits a school district from denying education to children who are not "legally admitted" to the U.S.

► 1985: *Cleveland Bd. of Ed. v. Loudermill*. In certain circumstances, school employees are entitled to pre-termination due process.

► 1991: *Lehnert v. Ferris Faculty Association*. NEA and its state and local affiliates lawfully can charge nonmembers an agency fee to help pay for collective bargaining activities.*

* indicates a direct legal victory for an NEA member or for the Association.

WASHINGTON WATCH

The Thomas Nomination

Last July, the nearly 9,000 delegates to the annual NEA Representative Assembly expressed "grave concern" about President Bush's latest Supreme Court nominee, Clarence Thomas. **NEA Today** staffer Diane Dismuke recently spoke with NEA Human and Civil Rights Director Chuck Williams about NEA's opposition to the Thomas nomination.

Why oppose Thomas when it's likely the President will nominate someone just as bad or even worse in his place?

It's a matter of principle. Clarence Thomas has a clear record of hostility toward public education and the civil rights of working men and women. Thomas, for example, supports tuition tax credits and vouchers for parents who want to send their children to private schools. He once told the *Washington Post* that he sends his son to private school because "the public schools don't educate people—they teach them they can get by without working."

If confirmed, Thomas would be the highest ranking, most prominent Black American in public life. His denigration of government policies and the civil rights movement—which helped him achieve his success—mocks the efforts of those who fought to create a more humane and just society.

The Supreme Court majority is already a Reagan-Bush product. How much worse could Thomas make it?

We don't have the luxury to consider this question. It would be irresponsible for an organization that promotes justice to sit this one out.

There's a lot at stake. The Court has indeed become more conservative, but recent important cases have been decided by narrow margins. Next year the Court will consider several crucial cases on desegregation and other civil rights issues. Replacing Justice Marshall with an extreme conservative like Thomas could reverse the outcome of those cases.

Won't Thomas's background make him sensitive to the needs of the disadvantaged?

There doesn't seem to be a correlation between Thomas's background as a poor Black growing up in the South and his political beliefs. Certainly he's entitled to his beliefs. But he's not entitled to impose them on America as a Supreme Court justice.

But isn't it the President's job to select U.S. Supreme Court nominees?

The Constitution calls on the Senate to consent to any Supreme Court nominee. And when Senators vote, they have an obligation to represent their constituents. At presstime, the Senate was close to a vote on the nomination, but NEA members reading this column may still have time to call or fax their viewpoints to their Senators' offices.

Local Look

KENTUCKY

Reform and Renewal

The Fayette County Education Association has become a key player in the district's education reform efforts as the wholesale shakeup of Kentucky's schools continues.

FCEA President Judy Johnson notes that when the district made the shift to a middle school system last year, the project's director turned to FCEA for help in creating and monitoring the evaluation process.

Then when officials noticed that an unusually high number of ninth graders with failure records—and poor attendance patterns—were entering high school, FCEA developed a proposal to involve the community in an effort to stress the importance of attendance.

FCEA's also been instrumental in getting regular pay restored to members who worked on reform projects over the summer yet received substitute pay rates.

OKLAHOMA

Making a Good Thing A Surer Thing

What does a local do when it wants to give college scholarships to area graduates who'll teach—but fears they'll change their minds along the way?

Oklahoma's Mid-Del Association of Classroom Teachers figured out one way: open your scholarship competition only to local graduates who are within 30 credit hours of graduation from a state college of education.

Using that formula, Mid-Del ACT recently gave out its first future teacher scholarships. Worth $500 each, they went to Mid-Del graduates Sylvia Shriver, an elementary learning disabled education major, and Sharon Cox, a secondary education major, both in their final year at Central State University.

The scholarship money was raised by the sale of T-shirts designed by NEA member Glenna Black.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Shortchanged by $500,000

The South Carolina Education Association has filed suit in support of 101 Charleston County members trying to force the school district to fork over some $500,000 in supplemental longevity pay. All the members have been employed by the district 19 years or more.

The suit on behalf of the 100 veteran teachers and one aide charges that the Board of Trustees' action in withholding the longevity pay breaks state laws, violates local contracts, and results in unfair treatment.

Charleston County Education Association President Trudie Gethers says before filing suit, union representatives met with the school board. "We were totally ignored by board members, so we had little recourse but to take legal action."

AMID ARIZONA BUDGET CUTS

Brian Winter

From left, FESA President Eric Young, FEA past president Tom Brown, and FESA former president Frank Loskota with the San Francisco Mountains in the background. Their political efforts paid off in a "people-oriented" school board in Flagstaff.

Flagstaff ESP Posts Major Gains

In a negotiating season marked by such phenomena as district-imposed contracts, two-tiered wage systems, losses of increments or COLAs, the Flagstaff Education Support Association was one of the few Arizona locals whose contract—their first one—came in on the plus side.

"We did very well negotiating a 4.5 percent salary increase," says Eric Young, who became president midway in the process.

"The district bargained in good faith," Young adds, "because the administrative negotiating team finally understood that the board wants a constructive relationship with FESA."

The Flagstaff school board was not always positive about ESP representation. FESA past president Avene Eyestone recalls the situation five years ago, when FESA got under way: "either the board or the administration would set out hoops we had to jump through to achieve bargaining agent status." (Arizona has no law on collective bargaining for school employees; the issue is left to the districts.)

"As recently as two years ago, by which time we were the recognized bargaining agent for support staff, the administration negotiating team still refused to negotiate 'working conditions' with us," Eyestone continues.

What knocked over the hoops was political action. FESA and the teacher local, the Flagstaff Education Association, worked together on political action campaigns, endorsing candidates in school board elections.

"We finally ended up with a "people-oriented board," Eyestone notes." Currently, four of the board's seven members have been elected with FESA/FEA support, and FESA has the usual range of bargaining rights, grievance procedures, etc.

But despite the Association-endorsed majority, FESA still has one major item on its negotiations agenda.

The local wants to undo the results of a salary study the district commissioned before FESA gained recognition. On the basis of that study, the district has frozen salaries at the top of the salary schedule.

NEVADA

Victory for Drivers, Custodians

School custodians and bus drivers who are members of Nevada's White Pine County Support Staff Organization (WPCSSO) recently won an out-of-court settlement against members of the school board, the county superintendent, and the district's hired negotiator.

The win means that two-thirds of the WPCSSO membership will keep their jobs, despite the board's attempt to get rid of them.

Also, members will continue to earn extra money driving students to after-school events, a practice the district had tried to stop. Other issues that the district refused to negotiate will also be on the table again.

The Nevada State Education Association assisted in filing the suit. "The district's actions are a textbook example of an attempt to break an infant union," says NSEA Executive Director Jim Cummings. "This settlement sends a clear message: union-busting tactics won't be tolerated in White Pine County or anywhere else in this state."

MINNESOTA

Regional Bargaining Almost a Reality

Over 500 teachers in seven school districts recently tried to take advantage of a new state law providing financial incentives for regional bargaining.

For 11 months, teachers in small central Minnesota towns—Little Falls, Grey Eagle, Onamia, Pierz, Royalton, Swanville, and Upsala—pounded out agreements with each other, with their boards and administrators, and with state officials.

The issues: a new contract for the unified group and state funding to equalize teachers' salaries and benefits.

But when all groups finally reached consensus, the bottom fell out.

"Things were looking really good," explains Onamia High School mathematics teacher Dennis Burr. "Then the bill providing the money died. It's just a kick in the butt."

"It's a tight funding year," explains MEA lobbyist Cheryl Furrer. "There simply wasn't enough money."

In contrast, a few years ago, the state funded a regional high school in the Lac Qui Parle area.

As a result, 150 teachers in four school districts now bargain one contract though one local Association.

Says one staffer, "It's a more equitable environment for kids and for teachers."

State Side

VERMONT

How About A State Health System?

Vermont-NEA is a prime mover in a coalition of unions and advocacy organizations pressing for better health care for Americans. And it's not just a dream: they have a plan.

The activists are moving on two levels at once. Vermont State Senator Cheryl Rivers has introduced a bill to set up a single-payer, universal health care system for the state.

And U.S. Representative Bernie Sanders—Vermont's only member of Congress—is introducing a bill in Washington to enable states to adopt this kind of universal health plan.

Notes Vermont-NEA President Molly Burke, "It's a national disgrace that so many people, especially children, cannot get adequate health care.

"Now Vermont has the chance to lead the way for a nationwide healthcare plan."

OREGON

Landmark School Restructuring

A recently passed school restructuring law could change the face of Oregon public education within the next several years.

The Oregon Educational Act for the 21st Century calls for elimination of primary grade levels, conclusion of the traditional high school curriculum after 10th grade, and—by the year 2010—expansion of the school year from 175 to 220 days.

Starting in 1995, successful students will earn a certificate of mastery after 10th grade. They can then either enroll in college prep courses or combine school work with on-the-job training.

Oregon Education Association President Karen Famous says the bill raises serious questions that require public review. But the most obvious issue is funding.

"The legislature provided no significant financial resources to accomplish the law's goals," says Famous.

"After last year's property tax limit cutting nearly $2 million in local school funding and requiring the state to replace it, we see the state's immediate task as funding the current program, not a radical new one."

Public Schools Enroll 41.5 Million

Public elementary and secondary school enrollment now totals 41.5 million, a jump of more than 500,000 from last year, and more than 1.5 million more students than in 1981, according to the U.S. Department of Education. The greatest enrollment hike is in the West, where schools gained about 250,000 students over last year. Midwest enrollment increased the least of all four regions. All figures below are in thousands.

Region and State	Fall 1981	Fall 1991[1]
United States	**40,022**	**41,575**
Northeast	**7,869**	**7,339**
Connecticut	505	477
Maine	216	218
Massachusetts	947	846
New Hampshire	164	181
New Jersey	1,200	1,101
New York	2,761	2,599
Pennsylvania	1,839	1,680
Rhode Island	143	139
Vermont	93	97
Midwest	**10,372**	**9,973**
Illinois	1,924	1,811
Indiana	1,025	962
Iowa	516	477
Kansas	410	442
Michigan	1,725	1,589
Minnesota	734	767
Missouri	819	826
Nebraska	273	274
North Dakota	118	117
Ohio	1,899	1,775
South Dakota	126	131
Wisconsin	804	802
South	**13,990**	**14,889**
Alabama	743	726
Arkansas	437	438
Delaware	95	102
District of Columbia	95	81
Florida	1,488	1,894
Georgia	1,056	1,179
Kentucky	658	623
Louisiana	782	767
Maryland	722	739
Mississippi	472	496
North Carolina	1,109	1,099
Oklahoma	583	574
South Carolina	609	628
Tennessee	838	827
Texas	2,936	3,379
Virginia	990	1,025
West Virginia	378	313
West	**7,791**	**9,374**
Alaska	91	111
Arizona	507	660
California	4,046	5,101
Colorado	544	576
Hawaii	163	176
Idaho	205	215
Montana	153	151
Nevada	151	206
New Mexico	268	305
Oregon	457	482
Utah	356	445
Washington	750	852

[1]Projected by the National Center for Education Statistics.

NOTE: Includes most kindergarten and some nursery school enrollment. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data survey, "Early Estimates: Key Statistics for Public Elementary and Secondary Education: School Year 1990-91," and *Projections of Education Statistics to 2002* (forthcoming). This table was prepared August 1991.

ILLINOIS

Lawmakers Send Mixed Message

In a marathon legislative session so lengthy it nearly shut down the state government, legislators passed two major education funding measures—one positive and one negative.

The good news: Lawmakers approved a permanent 10 percent increase in the state income tax dedicated to public education, which will mean some $395 million each year in state aid for schools.

The bad news: Lawmakers also established a state-imposed cap on local property tax increases in the five counties surrounding Chicago and a property tax freeze in Cook County.

The cap and freeze will cost education an estimated $250 million in 1991-92.

Also in this legislative session, a clear and significant IEA victory: a teacher-majority on the State Teacher Certification Board.

TEXAS

Yes, You Can Equalize

Well, almost. In Texas a new spending equalization plan passed constitutional muster and went into effect in August.

The plan groups school districts into regional taxing authorities, mandates minimum and maximum tax rates they can set, and equalizes spending per pupil within the regions on the basis of revenues obtained at the minimum rate.

So property-rich or low-tax-effort districts must share "excess" tax proceeds with poorer neighbors. As school opened this fall some 200 such districts stood to lose money that way—Dallas, $47 million.

Then, in an unrelated event, the legislature, meeting in special session, voted $1.9 billion in new state aid over the next two years. This was great news, but didn't change the way equalization was working out.

Still, most of the 200 districts found extra money one way or another, mostly—says the Texas State Teachers Association—by raising tax rates to the state maximum. And Texas taxpayers, though perhaps feeling pinched, knew they had done the fair thing.

DELAWARE

Setting Standards

Delaware educators will be well represented on the state's new Professional Standards Council.

Eight teacher/specialists from the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA) will serve on the council, which makes recommendations to the state board on certification requirements and teaching standards.

Leading the group will be DSEA Vice-President Earlene Gillan-Smith, who was unanimously elected council chair.

LOUISIANA

ESPs: Half a Loaf?

Education support personnel statewide won a $600 across-the-board raise this summer—considerably less than the 12 percent raise they lobbied for.

Since support personnel hadn't received a salary increase since 1984, the LAE launched a statewide media blitz last September, while ESPs conducted a full-scale lobbying campaign.

"We are temporarily satisfied," asserts LAE President Linda Day. "But we'll continue to press for increases in ESP salaries." One area of dissatisfaction: the legislature nixed a bill that would equalize ESP salaries statewide.

Meanwhile, LAE cites victory in the legislature's decision to postpone a controversial teacher evaluation plan for at least a year.

Meet:

Robert Foothorap

Robert Foothorap

Joy, Luck, and Literature

Amy Tan's novels, with the voice and vivid imagery of a storyteller, have struck a chord with millions of readers. Her first novel, **The Joy Luck Club**, *about four Chinese immigrant women and their daughters, has sold several hundred thousand copies; her most recent,* **The Kitchen God's Wife**, *based on her mother's life, tops the* **New York Times** *bestseller list. A former language therapist for disabled children, Tan is working on a screenplay of* **The Joy Luck Club**; *her first children's book will be out next spring. Amy Tan spoke with* **NEA Today** *staff writer Anita Merina in San Francisco.*

What was your childhood like?

I was the only Chinese girl in class from the third grade on. I remember trying to belong and feeling isolated. I felt ashamed of being different and ashamed of feeling that way. When I was a teenager, I rejected everything Chinese.

Do you think that's changed with kids today?

No, even though the kids are very different. Teenagers around the country have said they felt like the characters in *The Joy Luck Club*. They didn't understand their mothers, they didn't want to know about their culture, they didn't want to feel different.

By college, there's a sense of anger or curiosity, and a desire to reclaim their identity.

How can NEA members ease internal conflict?

Ask the students what cultural identity means to them. Is it the clothes you wear, the language you speak?

Ask about the negative images, too. I once felt ashamed to eat "horrible" five-course Chinese meals. I thought I'd grow up to look more American if I ate more "American" foods.

Is a student ashamed because her mother doesn't speak English well? Perhaps she's noticed that her mother doesn't get very good service in stores. Is that really her mother's fault?

How important is multicultural education for kids?

Growing up not knowing anything about Chinese history, I felt cut off from the past. That had two results. It was one reason I rejected my family's past—I was trying to identify with the Pilgrims and pioneers.

But I was never really interested in American history, either. History was just a barrage of facts that had no relevance to me.

How can NEA members help children who feel that way?

Now that I know about my family's past and my own cultural heritage, I'm fascinated by history.

So, as we become increasingly multicultural, I think it's imperative to give students that awareness—whether it's in a curriculum that covers every culture in the world, or an effort to let students know they have a personal stake in the past.

The past is not useless information. It's what shaped us, the lessons we've learned and not learned.

Which teachers really made a difference for you?

One helped me discover a love of literature. He took a book I absolutely loathed and asked us to describe the images that were most vivid, most memorable. It didn't matter whether the images we remembered really appeared in the book as we described them. What was important was how we remembered them emotionally.

One image was a woman coming out of prison, from the darkness into the harsh sunlight. The teacher asked us questions—Was it hot on her face? Was she going upstairs or straight out? I answered with what I'd imagined.

I discovered all these images in a book I once hated, *The Scarlet Letter*. What a wonderful way to remember a story!

How do you want your novels used in the classroom?

All I can say is: What makes literature so wonderful is that you discover it yourself, you come upon the treasures yourself. Students should have the same sense of freedom to discover what they love about literature.

Is writing the same kind of process for you?

Yes, that's what makes it so exciting. You can come up with structures and ideas at first, but it's what you stumble across without self-consciousness that's new, exciting, and much more honest. These things are within you, in your life's experience and the way you perceive the world.

Tell me about your children's book.

It's based on "The Moon Lady," a fairy tale in *The Joy Luck Club*. I've talked with parents and children who loved this story of a little girl. It also tells of the loss and reclamation of cultural identity.

Are you taking any special approach to *The Moon Lady*?

I used to love illustrated children's books. You could look at the illustrations and make up stories.

I don't see many books like that anymore, but ours will be that way. A young child can listen to the story being read and see the main illustration, but as children grow older and more familiar with the story they'll notice all these other things going on in the background.

You're known for the storyteller voice in your novels.

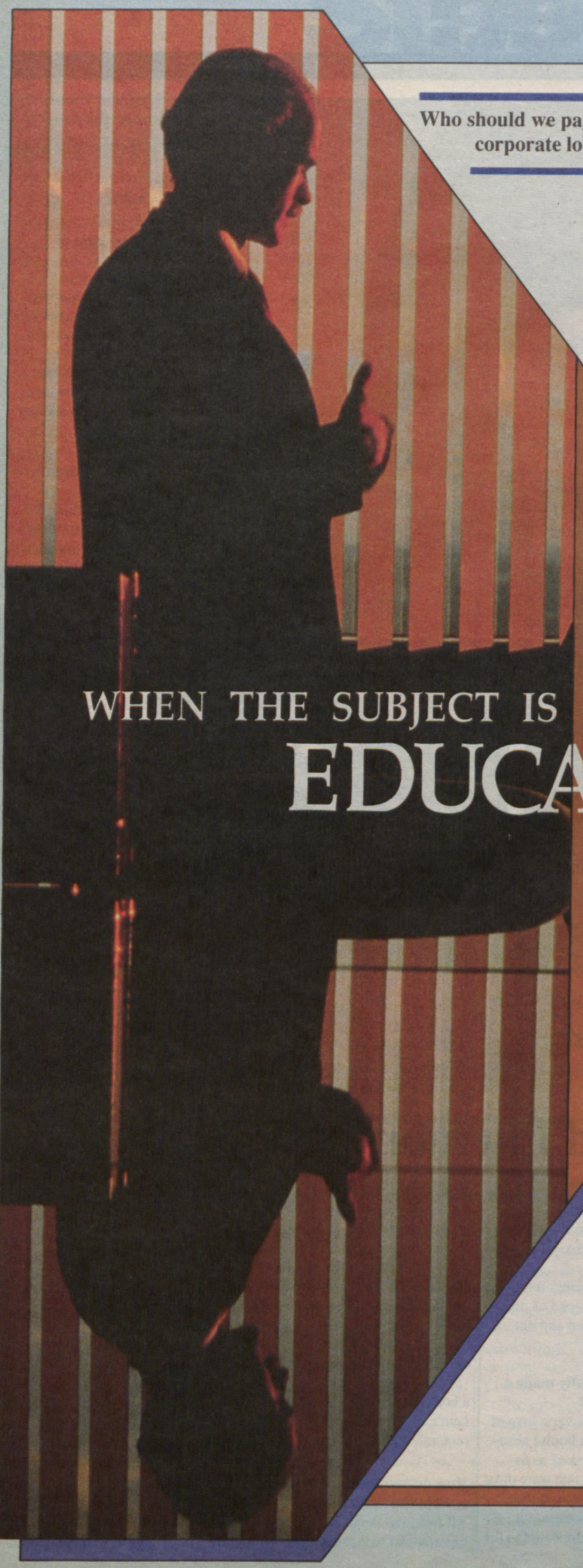
My imagination isn't really a voice telling me stories but a visual imagination. When I was a child, I heard a sermon about Hell, and I went to the sandbox and started digging to see if I could find it, and I believed I could.

My mother is the natural storyteller. Ask her about the type of mushrooms she had in China, and she'll move into a wonderful story that lasts three hours.

The voice in my mother and in my novels is one and the same. She's not merely recounting events, she's tapped into a part of her heart where those emotions lie.

What do you enjoy reading?

I love reading history, interviews, and, of course, first-person stories with a rich sense of the past. I love fresh, new voices.



WHEN THE SUBJECT IS EDUCATION WHO

Who should we pay more attention to? The CEOs who boost public education? Or the corporate lobbyists who trash school-nurturing tax increases in state legislatures?

Business speaks to education with many different voices. In Massachusetts, the High Tech Council continually presses for school-busting tax cuts, while in Oklahoma, the business-supported GO Coalition fights to save newly approved taxes for schools.

Business interests lobby state and local legislators for ayes—or nays—on taxes. And ask —or don't ask—for tax exemptions or abatements to promote economic growth (reducing the tax base). Business provides some $11 billion a year (20 percent of tax income) to the state and local governments that fund more than 90 percent of K-12 budgets.

Could business pay more? Critics such as Harvard economist Robert Reich say yes. By continually lobbying for lower tax rates and more abatements and exemptions, Reich says, business deprives state and local government of millions of dollars a year—and all it does in return is agree to stick around.

But business is more to education than a mere source of tax revenue. Business firms are also the source of philanthropic grants to education, via nonprofit foundations created for corporate giving.

In the 1980s, corporate direct giving to K-12 education soared, from $29 million in 1979 to $247 million in 1989 ($400 million if you count indirect giving). By the end of the 1980s, 140,000 school-business partnership projects touched some 40 percent of the nation's schools.

But now, suddenly, in the 1990s, business is asking for systemic reform. "Our only chance for success is to go beyond piecemeal efforts," says John Akers, IBM's CEO and chair of the Business Roundtable's Education Task Force.

Well said. But business is also recommending specific remedies in return for its acquiescence to tax increases or its willingness to fund reform projects.

Hence the fear on the part of educators such as Donna Rhodes, head of NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education, that business might "put a box around school reform.

"There's a danger that business will be so prescriptive in its projects that restructuring will come to a halt," Rhodes cautions. "The incentive for schools that want business funding will be to do the known, not the unknown."

One such "known" is the use of student test scores to measure reform's success.

IBM CEO John Akers

"If you go to a meeting of CEOs from Fortune 500 companies," says Colorado Education Association President Dan Morris, "they'll tell you 'restructuring is great, but while you're doing it, get the SAT scores up.'

"What these business people don't understand," Morris continues, "is that restructuring and higher scores imply different approaches in the classroom. If you're looking for higher test scores, you can just make kids memorize what will be on the test. You don't have to restructure your schools at all."

That's why what's being called "a battle for the heart and mind of business" is being played out across the nation—in state legislatures, on foundation panels, in Congressional committee hearings.

One state where business's heart and mind are in the right places is Oklahoma. Mainstream business leaders there believe the education system needs to be changed, but they're pragmatic rather than dogmatic

about how to do it.

"When you study the issues," says Stillwater National Bank CEO Robert L. McCormick, Jr., "you learn that formulas like 'choice' and 'free market principles' aren't the answer.

"At the same time, we know that the education system we have now doesn't work," McCormick adds, "especially with the bottom half of the class. If we want to be competitive internationally, we have to do as well educating this group as other countries do."

A year ago, an Oklahoma citizen task force, with McCormick as vice chair, wrote a report that eventually became H.B. 1017, an OEA-backed school reform bill that authorized new sales and income taxes—on business as well as individuals—for education.

A statewide strike by Association members in Oklahoma was the catalyst for 1017's passage. But, contends McCormick, so was task force support.

"If educators had gone to the legislature by themselves," McCormick explains, "the new taxes never would have passed. The educators would have been seen as merely pursuing their own self-interest."

In return for supporting reform, the Oklahoma business people on the task force wanted evidence of accomplishment: for example, "output-oriented" measures of quality (e.g., the dropout rate) as opposed to "input-oriented" measures (e.g., attendance requirements). Output-oriented measures ended up in the bill.

The Oklahoma experience shows that educators and business can agree on goals and measures.

"In fact, business is forcing us to be more specific about what we need," says Dan Morris, in Colorado.

"We've allowed money to become our quick fix," the CEA president continues, "while they, of course, are fixated on test scores. We have to tell them what we'll do with the money, and they have to learn the limits of numbers."

Which isn't to say a meeting of minds is at hand in every state—or at the federal level. In fact, even as business and educators learn to talk the same language, the Bush Administration continues to tout ideological solutions—"school choice," vouchers—to education problems.

Still, the pursuit of common ground with business is worthwhile—because children will prosper when it is achieved. As they prosper in Oklahoma's Choteau-Mazie district, where 7th grade scores on the state writing test went from the 20th to the 91st percentile in one year because the district used H.B. 1017 money to hire additional writing teachers.

—Nancy R. Needham

Seeking a Rewarding Relationship?

NEA affiliates seeking partnerships with business have somewhere to go for help: NEA's office of Education, Business, and Outreach.

Outreach director LaMar Haynes suggests such affiliates first take a look at the NEA Board of Directors' seven criteria for partnerships, adopted earlier this year.

Here, highly distilled, are the criteria the NEA adopted. A good school-business partnership—

- ► Intends to strengthen and improve public education.
- ► Has mutually agreed-upon objectives that support the schools.
- ► Promotes student learning, skills, interests, and school participation.
- ► Does *not* inhibit educators from making decisions about curriculum and instruction, the province of professional educators.
- ► Meets an educational need, not a commercial purpose.
- ► Uses the same selection criteria for donated as for purchased materials and equipment.
- ► Commends corporate friends of education who support education's goals, programs, and policies.

SPEAKS FOR BUSINESS?

Richard S. Heyza/*Seattle Times*

Boeing CEO Frank Shrontz

Stillwater National Bank CEO Robert McCormick, Jr.

Taking on Boeing In Washington State

Nowhere has the battle—still undecided—for the heart and mind of business been more visible than in Washington State.

Last spring Seattle mayor Norm Rice (along with other mayors in the state) faced the threat of a strike by education employees unless the governor and legislature dealt with school finance.

To avert a strike in his city, Rice suggested a meeting between two Association leaders—Washington Education Association President Carla Nuxoll and Seattle Education Association President Reese Lindquist—and Forrest "Bud" Coffey, chief lobbyist for the Boeing Corporation.

Why invite Boeing? Because the Seattle-based airplane manufacturer is the state's largest employer and taxpayer ($338 million a year), and politicians in the state look out for Boeing's interests. A meeting of minds between the Association and the company would have made legislating easier for governor and legislature.

But Boeing is also seen as Washington State's largest *non*taxpayer. The exemptions the company has obtained over the years from the state legislature include one—said to be worth $450 million a year—that exempts purchasers of Boeing airplanes from paying a state sales tax.

These elements—the threatened strike, the tax exemptions—were "background" for the Seattle meeting, though not discussed there.

"What Reese and I told Bud Coffey is that the schools need a steady, growing source of revenue that will help us reduce class size and address special needs," Carla Nuxoll recalls.

"What Coffey said Boeing wanted," Nuxoll continues, "was 'continuous quality improvement' in education.

"We didn't disagree, but we didn't reach a meeting of minds, and the meeting adjourned."

The following weekend some 45 WEA locals voted to strike. The local presidents agreed to reconsider the walkout if a second meeting with Boeing yielded results. But there was no second meeting; Boeing backed out. The strike was on.

The finale, which came a couple of weeks later, was witnessed by (among others) a third WEA leader, Bellevue Education Association President Michael Coleman. Coleman was lobbying at the state capitol for a special session of the legislature.

"That day we saw Bud Coffey go in and out of the governor's office three times," Coleman says. "After the third time, the governor sent the legislature home."

Postscript. Six weeks later, the governor did call the legislators back for a special session, and they voted the schools $195 million more than the governor had first proposed. But Boeing got another tax exemption, this one on software the company modifies.

Yet Carla Nuxoll still considers business a "potential ally" for education.

Last summer Governor Booth Gardner named educators, including WEA, to a new Blue Ribbon commission on school funding that also includes representatives of business and the legislature.

"Had there not been a strike," Nuxoll notes, "there'd be no commission, and I would never had had the opportunity to hear Boeing's Frank Shrontz, tell a questioner that the issue wasn't 'what the future worker needs to know,' but the 'quality of life.'

"That gives me hope."

—N.R.N.

WEA President Carla Nuxoll

RESOURCES

TV Tips

The Infinite Voyage: Secrets of a Frozen World—*PBS, Thursday, Oct. 3, 8-9 p.m. ET.* The work of marine biologists in a U.S. Antarctic research program is the focus of this first in a series of four programs on humans and their world.

For free educational guides and posters for high school students, write to The Infinite Voyage, WQED, 4802 Fifth Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213.

A&E

Kingdom of the Wild—*Arts & Entertainment, Thursdays, 8-9 p.m. ET, starting Oct. 3.* Oct. 3: "Polar Bear"; Oct. 10: "Killer Whale" (photo above); Oct. 17: "Gorilla"; Oct. 24: Lions of Etosha"; Oct. 31: "The Family that Lived with Elephants."

PBS

Long Ago, Far Away—*PBS, continuing weekly series, Saturdays, 6:30-7 p.m. ET.* Oct. 5: "The Fool of the World and His Flying Ship," Part I (photo above); Oct. 12: "The Fool of the World and His Flying Ship," Part II; Oct. 19: "The Emperor's New Clothes"; Oct. 26: "Uncle Elephant."

PBS

Columbus and the Age of Discovery—*PBS, Sunday, Oct. 6, 8-10 p.m. ET; Monday, Oct. 7, 8-10 p.m. ET; Tuesday, Oct. 8, 8-10 p.m. ET; and Wednesday, Oct. 9, 8-9 p.m. ET. Encore broadcast: Sat., Oct. 12, 1-8 p.m. ET.* Seven-episode epic documentary—filmed in 27 countries over three years—about Christopher Columbus, his era, and his legacy, including how different cultures view him (photo above).

David L. Wolper Presents: The Primal Man—*Arts & Entertainment, Mondays, October 7 and 14, 8-9 p.m. ET.* Ongoing four-part series tracing 4 million years of human development.

Childhood—*PBS, Mondays, 8-9 p.m. ET, starting Oct. 14.* A six-part series that examines how parents and societies have raised their children throughout history.

Dedicated to the One I Love—*CBS, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 4-5 p.m. ET.* Schoolbreak Special. A high school yearbook editor faces more than one crisis when her ex-boyfriend is killed in a car crash while on drugs and she learns he was HIV positive. (See *NEA Today*, Sept., for study guide.)

Educators can purchase VHS tapes of Schoolbreak Specials after the original broadcast as long as supplies last. For information, write to Martin Garcia, 7800 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036.

Amy and the Angel—*ABC, Thursday, Oct. 24, 4-5 p.m. ET.* Rebroadcast of an Afterschool Special classic about a teenager with low self-esteem who gets to see what the lives of those around her would be like had she never been born.

For copies of *ABC Learning Alliance*, a free newsletter listing all ABC programming of interest to children, contact ABC Community Relations, 77 W. 66th St., 9th floor, New York, NY 10023.

These listings are provided by KIDSNET, *a computerized clearinghouse for children's TV and radio in Washington, D.C.*

Assignment Discovery Study Guide For American History

Rediscovering America: A New Perspective on American Heritage

Airs Wednesday, October 16 and December 4, 1991, from 9:00-10:00 a.m. E.T. on The Discovery Channel. This program may be taped and used in the classroom for one year from the date of taping.

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To purchase Rediscovering America, call 1/800/257-5126 or write to: Films for the Humanities, Box 2053, Princeton, NJ 08543.

Rediscovering America offers students a new perspective on our American heritage by tracing the themes of human civilization and nature in American landmarks. Written and hosted by Roger Kennedy, director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History, this documentary explores the ancient earthen structures of North America and compares them with the later architecture of Thomas Jefferson and Louis Sullivan.

Suitable for middle and high school students, **Rediscovering America** supports an interdisciplinary curriculum, addressing American and ancient history, science, technology, art, and architecture.

PART I

Synopsis:

Mr. Kennedy takes viewers back through time as he visits some of the ancient earthworks once prevalent in the Midwest. Huge earthen calendars and high pyramids, built long before Columbus landed in America, indicate civilizations well versed in astronomy, geometry, and engineering, and in tune with their natural surroundings.

Previewing Activities

1. Before viewing, establish the program's historic period. Prepare students for analogies drawn between North Americans and the Roman, Egyptian, and Mayan civilizations.

2. How can the study of historic landmarks help us understand those who came before us?

3. Think about the earliest Americans. Who were they? Where did they come from? Why is it important to learn about them?

4. What is the value in tracking the passage of time? What methods might ancient civilizations have used to mark time?

Postviewing Activities

1. Make a time line of ancient civilizations, highlighting those of North America. Can you create one for your community?

2. Compare and contrast the design and function of the geometric earthworks of the Hopewells with the animal forms built by Hopewell ancestors.

3. On a parking lot or athletic field, make circles 3', 50', and 100' in diameter. Discuss how you adapted your methods to accommodate increasing size. Compare your work to that of the Hopewell's 153-foot circle.

PART II

Synopsis:

After a nationwide controversy about the origin of the earthworks, interest in these landmarks faded and most were destroyed. But in the early 1900s, architect Louis Sullivan revived the use of natural design to establish an American architectural style. His work is contrasted with that of Thomas Jefferson, whose linear style made little use of nature and natural boundaries.

Previewing Activities

1. Have students compare and contrast the Indian civilizations presented in Part I with American Indian stereotypes. Many Americans attributed the earthworks to a "lost race" of Hindus, Welsh, Vikings, or Israelites. Discuss why 19th century Americans might have believed a lost race theory.

2. Describe the architectural style of your school. Does it blend in with its natural surroundings?

Postviewing Activities

1. How did Louis Sullivan's architectural style incorporate nature?

2. Discuss the statement that Jefferson's style imposed man on nature, not within it. How does this differ from Sullivan's?

3. Cite examples of modern uses of historic landmarks. Compare the golf course located on Hopewell earthworks, the air conditioned ice cream parlor in the renovated Sullivan bank, and the museum at Monticello.

Resources

Anthro-Notes, a free newsletter, contact Ann Kaupp, Department of Anthropology, NHB363 MRC112, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC 20560.

Diamonstein, Barbaralee. **Remaking America**. N.Y.: Crown, 1986. New uses for old places.

Credits: This guide was written by Barbara Bourne for KIDSNET, the clearinghouse for children's audio, video, radio, and television, and is a regular feature of *NEA Today*. We welcome your comments. Write to KIDSNET, 6856 Eastern Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20012. © 1991 KIDSNET.

Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work

Small Town, Big Changes

Rural school districts typically lack a lot of money, long lists of course offerings, and reserve players for their football team.

But a tiny village on the St. Joseph River in southwestern Michigan is proving that community spirit and initiative can more than make up the difference when it comes to educational innovation.

With fewer than 50 teachers for about 725 students in grades K-12, the Mendon school district is the smallest of NEA's growing network of Learning Labs.

But small size hasn't prevented big accomplishments. Over the past few years, Mendon's educators have joined with community residents to develop school district mission statements and a three-year strategic plan.

They've established a district curriculum council and individual school improvement teams. And they've applied for and won three grants from the state Department of Education, allowing them to purchase satellite dishes, create more professional development opportunities for teachers, and make big changes in their curriculum.

"It's a very exciting time for teachers here," says elementary teacher and Mendon Education Association President Gayle Green. "There's a whole new level of collaboration with all education's stakeholders—and we have a lot more freedom to make change."

Last year, the five middle school teachers involved all 120 seventh and eighth graders in an interdisciplinary Mendon history project. With guidance, independent research, and help from the community, the students made videos, pictures, and models of the town.

Students spoke eloquently about the 1914 fire, how maple syrup is made, and how Mendon maintains its water quality.

"We were amazed when we saw it all," says middle school science teacher Kathy Trenary. "We learned that kids enjoy learning more when they have the freedom to set their own goals and make their own mistakes. For them, it's a lot better than being told what to learn and how to learn it."

High school government and history teacher Bob Sedam's been experimenting, too. "I don't teach facts and information any more," he says. "I do as little lecturing as possible. I ask students essential questions without right or wrong answers. The kids have to think."

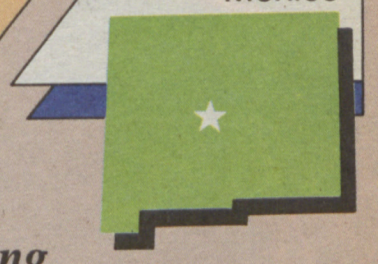
Other ongoing projects: an elementary wellness program, Friday folders to send home weekly evidence of younger students' progress, and more cooperative learning experiences.

"Lots of people are thinking in terms of change now," Sedam says. "And they're thinking of it as a continuous process."

"People in Mendon," says NEA Learning Lab Coordinator Bob Barkley, "have begun to realize that their smallness is really an advantage."

—Stefanie Weiss

Mendon teacher Rita Decker and a group of students at the town's summertime Riverfest.



Getting The Jump on 'Jump Start'

This past summer, 170 elementary school children in Los Lunas, south of Albuquerque, went to learning camp at school for two weeks before school started. The camp's teachers, drawn from the school's regular faculty, designed the camp program and ran it themselves.

The Los Lunas summer camp was probably the first in the country to explicitly follow NEA's Operation Jump Start model. The camp operated for two weeks in August at Raymond Gabaldon Elementary School.

Camp cofounder Sharon Morgan, kindergarten teacher at Gabaldon and an NEA director from New Mexico, first heard of Jump Start at the 1990 NEA Representative Assembly, where NEA President Keith Geiger introduced the concept.

What Geiger proposed were summer learning camps, funded by new federal/state/local money, to prepare at-risk students for a successful school year.

"A summer learning camp fit right in with the school-year programs we were already seeking state funds for," Morgan says. She and colleagues Joan Goodman and Kathy Tafoya immediately applied to New Mexico's new 21st Century Program for funding for the camp. By September 1990 they had a commitment.

With the state covering teacher salaries and children's transportation, the Gabaldon school could offer the two-week experience free to every student. Nearly half of Gabaldon's 400 students came, including some incoming kindergartners.

"We taught arts and crafts, cooking, Spanish culture, science, and math," Morgan explains. "We wanted to use the summer to experiment with new subjects and teaching strategies."

The children came to camp only in the mornings, so the staff used the afternoons for planning and for making home visits.

"We were free to act like professionals," says Morgan. "We not only designed the courses, we set our own expectations—higher than anyone would set for us—and we met them."

—Nancy R. Needham

Los Lunas, New Mexico, teacher Sharon Morgan, cofounder of the local Operation Jump Start program, shows Jessica Smith and Eric Bensley how to measure material for a sewing pattern.

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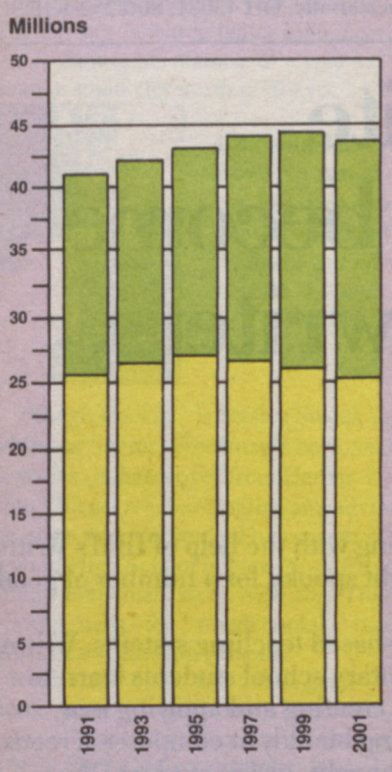
DATA BANK

2001: An Education Odyssey

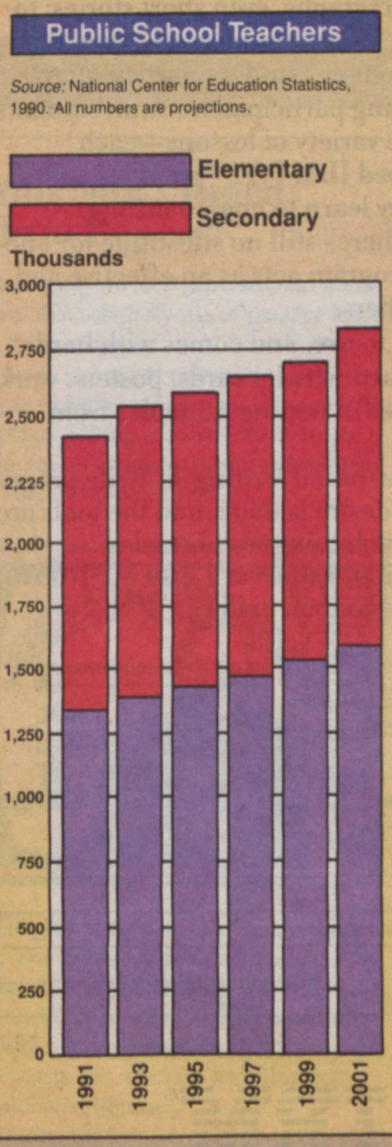
Public School Enrollment

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990. All numbers are projections.

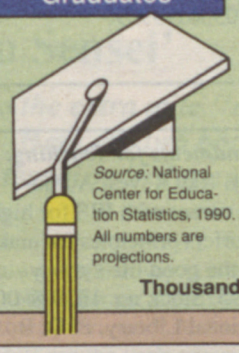


Public School Teachers

Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990. All numbers are projections.



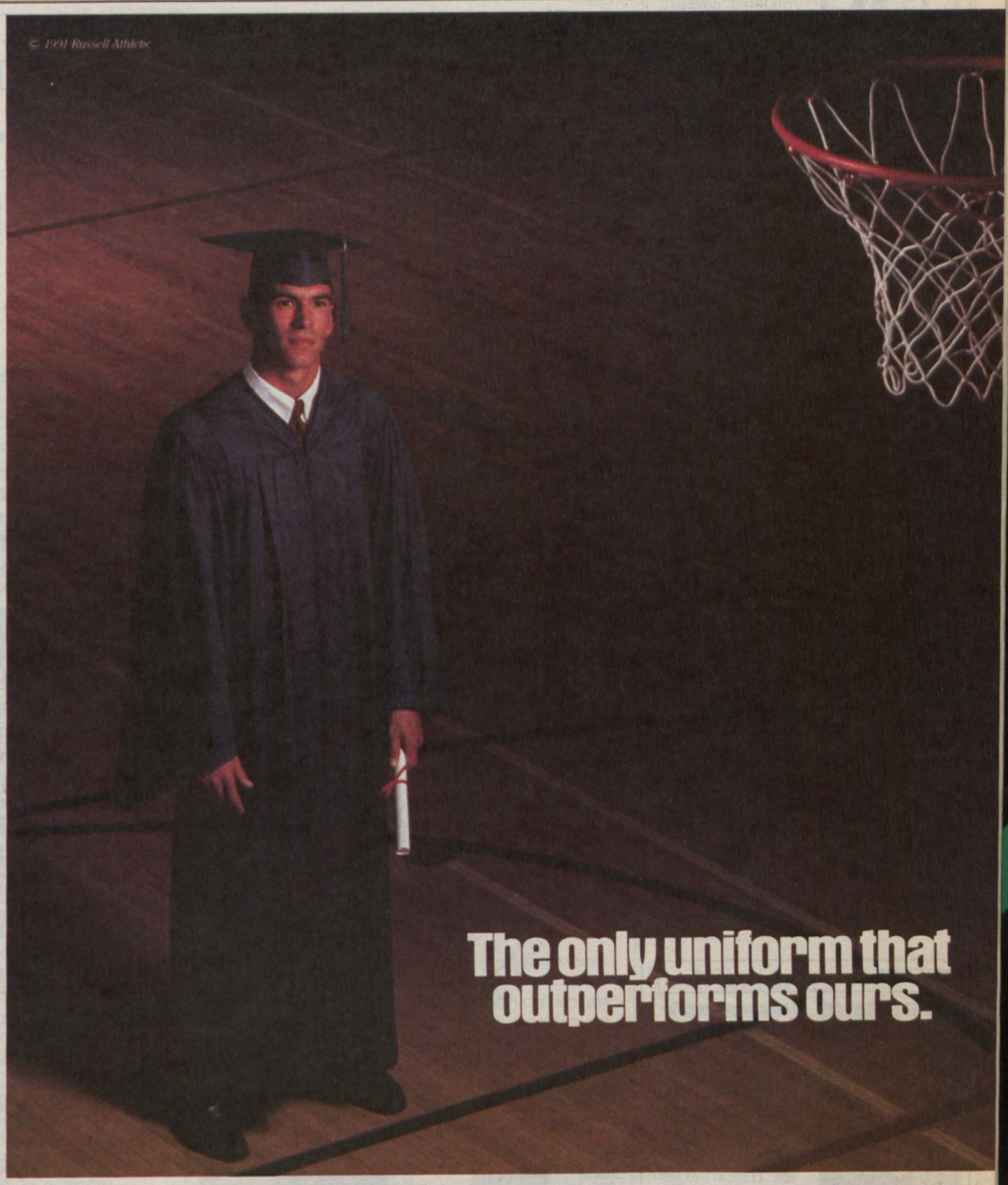
Graduates



Source: National Center for Education Statistics, 1990. All numbers are projections.

Thousands

Year	Public high school	Associate degree	Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Doctorate
1991	2,232	463	1,024	321	36
1993	2,229	461	1,063	323	36
1995	2,329	458	1,047	324	36
1997	2,452	463	1.015	324	36
1999	2,587	477	1,010	325	36
2001	2,865	489	1,037	327	36



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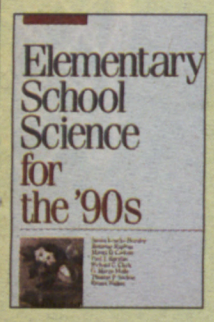
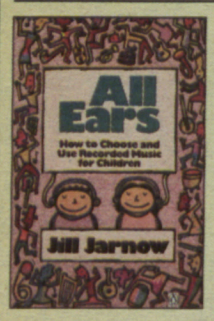
Zora Neale Hurston: A Storyteller's Life. Janelle Yates. The life of the noted Black folklorist, novelist, and playwright, published on the 100th anniversary of her birth, with illustrations by David Adams. Ages 10-15. 90 pp. $9.95. From booksellers or direct from Ward Hill Press (add $1 p&h), Box 424, Staten Island, NY 10304, 718/816-9449.

SCIENCE



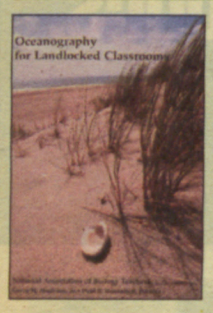
Elementary School Science for the '90s. Susan Loucks-Horsley et al. How to organize a school science program, teach it, evaluate it, and "sell" it to the community. 166 pp. $13.95. Stock no. 611-90119. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314-1403.

MUSIC



All Ears: How To Choose and Use Recorded Music for Children. Jill Jarnow. A savvy parent's guide to pop, folk, and classical recordings school-age kids will relate to. Penguin. 210 pp. $9.95 from booksellers, or add $1.50 p&h for credit card charge at 800/526-0275.

SCIENCE



Oceanography for Landlocked Classrooms. Gerry M. Madrazo, Jr., and Paul B. Hounshell, editors. Feeling glum because your school's not by the sea? Here are experiments students can do anywhere to gain knowledge of the sea, its plants, and its creatures. 104 pp. $15; NABT members, $12. Add $2 p&h. Order from National Association of Biology Teachers, 11250 Roger Bacon Drive #19, Reston, VA 22090.

BILINGUAL

Literacy Con Cariño: A Story of Migrant Children's Success. Curtis W. Hayes et al. A bilingual teacher and two university professors redesign bilingual education for migrant Mexican children. 142 pp. $13.50 plus $3.50 p&h. Heinemann Educational Books, 361 Hanover St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3959.

PEDAGOGY

The Ten Commandments for Teaching: A Teacher's View. Ray Reyes. Author Reyes, who left a career with IRS for high school teaching, offers principles for making teaching and the good life synonymous. 60 pp. $8.95. Stock no. 1539-8-00-FF, NEA Professional Library, P. O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516. 800/229-4200, FAX 203/933-5276.

NATIONAL UNICEF DAY

National UNICEF Day (October 31). The 41st annual Halloween fund-raiser for children in the developing world. Free package includes teachers guide, poster, and collection cartons. U.S. Committee for UNICEF, 921 Eastwind Dr., Westerville, OH 43081, 800/252-KIDS.

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BOOK BEAT

'Curazy Boy' and the 'Tough Cookie': A Couple of 'Nekketsu Sensei'

The Japanese call teachers who go the extra mile "nekketsu sensei"—"hot-blooded teachers." Here are two books about Americans who fill that bill—one teaching in Japan, the other on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

"Curazy boy" (his students call him that) is Bruce Feiler, an American who spends a year teaching English in a Japanese junior high. *Learning To Bow* is his memoir of a year in Sano, a small city north of Tokyo.

Learning To Bow: An American Teacher in a Japanese School
By Bruce S. Feiler
Ticknor & Fields.
321 pp. $19.95.

"Tough Cookie" is Jessica Siegel, the subject of Samuel Freedman's book *Small Victories* (in hardcover from Harper & Row.) Siegel teaches English and advises the prize-winning student newspaper at Seward High School in New York City. Author Freedman, an ex-*New York Times* reporter, hangs the "tough cookie" label on Jessica's teaching persona.

Read either book, and you'll get a funny, smart, idealistic hero. Read both, and you'll learn that teaching in Japan and in New York City are different, but not always in the way you expected.

Take the ways the two schools teach "perseverance." At Sano Junior High, staff use the verb *gamman,* meaning to endure or persevere, to explain what children must learn to do to become good citizens. What they must do, Feiler says, is to conform, to subordinate individual wants and tastes to group norms.

So the school dress code mandates regulation crewcuts for boys. When two boys arrive at school with parts shaved into their heads, the principal calls them to his office and blackens the exposed scalp with a felt-tip pen.

In Manhattan, on the other hand, Jessica Siegel teaches perseverance by example—pushing and nagging her students to persevere—so they no longer *have* to endure. Her mission, according to Freedman, is "shaking poor minority teenagers out of...belief in their own insignificance."

In the most gripping story in *Small Victories,* Jessica borrows her parents' car and races upstate to get four students with bad grades (but much promise) to the admissions office at SUNY New Paltz in time for a Friday afternoon interview.

Small Victories: The Real World of a Teacher, Her Students, and Their High School
By Samuel G. Freedman
Harper Perennial (paper).
432 pp. $10.95.

The fact that they they'll at best get to share an hour's time—if everything goes right, which it doesn't—doesn't faze her. The point is you have to persevere—try anything that might work in some student's life.

Or, make a comparison on "invisible violence." Does it surprise you that it will show up in Sano Junior High, but not at Seward?

Feiler observes that in his school, the "threat of force...surrounds students at all times." Force in the form of school staff disciplining wayward students (who might be made to kneel in the hallway where staff can cuff or slap them as they go by.) Force in the form of groups of students bullying individual students.

Behind both kinds of violence, Feiler says, is the "need" to enforce conformity. Teachers do it. So do students—beating up a classmate who wears a jacket with a nonregulation red dragon on it.

Nor are other different students tolerated—those who lived outside Japan, who are disabled, or who come from a low caste family.

So it is Sano Junior High, not Seward High School, that has a student suicide in the year it's under a writer's scrutiny. The student, a ninth grader, was hounded to death by other boys, simply because his forebears had been in the despised caste of leatherworkers.

Of course, Freedman knows that one reason Seward High isn't violent is because the violence-prone don't stick around for high school.

In fact, neither school is successful if you're looking to see how much academic impact they have on most students.

In a typical marking period, Jessica has to fail more than a third of the students even in her best classes—not so much because they do their work poorly as because they don't do it at all. And this is a teacher who is so gifted that she can make her immigrant Hispanic and Chinese students see what they have in common with 17th-century Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet.

But surprise! The Japanese junior high also has academic weaknesses. Feiler thinks that Japan's famous *juku* (cram schools) have to exist because the regular schools are so busy teaching conformity and good habits.

Learning To Bow and *Small Victories* are two winners. Read your seventh graders Feiler's chapter on seventh grade. They won't believe it. And contemplate how hard it is for schools to figure out what they should do—and then do it.

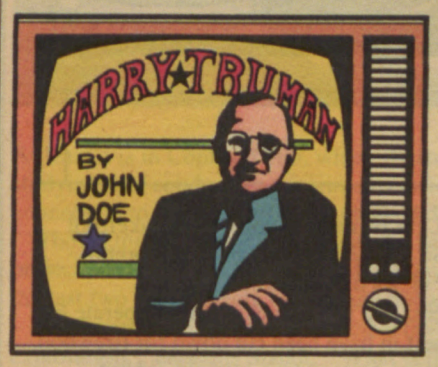
—Nancy R. Needham
Book Review Editor

TRENDS

And Now, Taped Term Papers!

Trust today's video generation to transform that scholarly rite of passage known as the term paper.

Now, instead of committing priceless prose to paper, kids are selecting raw film footage, editing it down into 10 or so minutes on a videocassette, and dubbing in voice-over narration.



Helping to feed this technological marvel: *The Video Encyclopedia of the 20th Century.* Stored on two optical laser disks, the encyclopedia contains 83 hours of newsreel footage, tape from television newscasts and specials, and film from presidential libraries.

During the last five years, about 1,200 school libraries have bought the video encyclopedia (at a cost of about $12,000), according to its producer, New York's CEL Communications.

Beep If You Love a Fad!

Telephone pagers or "beepers"—long-standard equipment for doctors and business executives—have become popular with the trendy teen set. As usual, some grownups aren't thrilled with the adolescents' fashion.

Most teens with beepers rely on them for instant access to parents and friends. Others, apparently, use the pagers to conduct drug deals.

Bottom line: some parents like the way beepers let the family stay in touch when they or their kids are at work, but dozens of cities have banned the devices from school property.

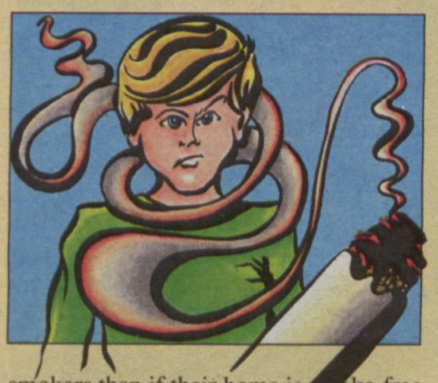
Do Kids Really Need Recess?

The answer: it's a healthy and productive use of time for young children. That's the majority opinion among 383 elementary and middle school principals surveyed by the National Association of Elementary School Principals.

Cutting back on recess may appear to offer relief to schools pressed to give more time to tests, basic subjects, and combatting social problems. But the principals say recess is a worthwhile investment of time if it's well organized and supervised by adults.

Second-hand Smoke, First-hand Illness

Confirming many people's suspicions, Yale University School of Medicine researchers have found that children run a greater risk of getting serious infectious diseases if they live in a household of



smokers than if their home is smoke-free.

Youngsters exposed to passive smoke run a risk close to four times that of other kids for contracting three types of serious infections—invasive bacterial, local bacterial, and viral.

In contrast, say the Yale researchers, being in day care doesn't substantially increase a healthy kid's likelihood of coming down with a serious infectious disease. The researchers note two exceptions to this finding. Those are influenza and meningitis, both of which are relatively rare.

Text Textures: Creamy or Chunky?

Chunk-style, please, for below-average readers. Breaking up sentences into groups of meaningful phrases with spaces in between—a process known as "chunking"—raises low comprehension scores an average of 10 percent in a recent study.

High-ability readers aren't affected the same way, according to the study of 50 eighth graders, reported in *Reading Improvement.* They probably separate words into meaningful phrases on their own.

Teachers aren't likely to have time to retype texts to put four spaces between the phrases. Students, however, can learn to separate phrases with a pencil or marker before reading for comprehension.

People

Tiger Burns Bright Above It All

Eric Gregory

At Nebraska's Cedar Rapids High School, the south wall of the gym—in the words of poet William Blake—"frames a fearful symmetry": a 40-foot-long tiger in an 80-foot mural 30 feet above the gym floor, its right front paw dangling behind the basketball net.

The tiger—the school mascot—is the school's biggest student-painted mural. Others throng the classrooms and common spaces of the 700-student rural school.

The mural master is principal and Association member **Len Homan** *(inset photo)*. Not an art teacher at all, Homan is nonetheless the instructor for Art II, a problem-solving class.

"I gave the five kids in the class a drawing for the tiger," Homan explains, "showed them a little about mixing paint, and told them 'you solve the problems.'"

"They did. They're farm kids, used to heights, tools, and scaffolding."

From Laurels to Legislature

As a teacher, NEA-Retired member **Lucille Meadows** put in nearly four decades as an Association activist. Since she retired, she's become the second African-American woman to hold a seat in the West Virginia legislature.

"I was one of WVEA's original Congressional Contact Team members, so it's interesting to work on education and civil rights issues from the inside," says Sen. Meadows.

Three years ago, Meadows helped create the Caring Award, given annually by the West Virginia Education Association to teachers who "take the extra time to make a difference in a child's life."

This year it was her turn: Meadows was the 1991 recipient of NEA's Mary Hatwood Futrell Award for Creative Leadership in Women's Rights. What about next year?

"It's election time," she says. "I'm planning to run."

Craig Cunningham

Emily Buchanan

For the Birds

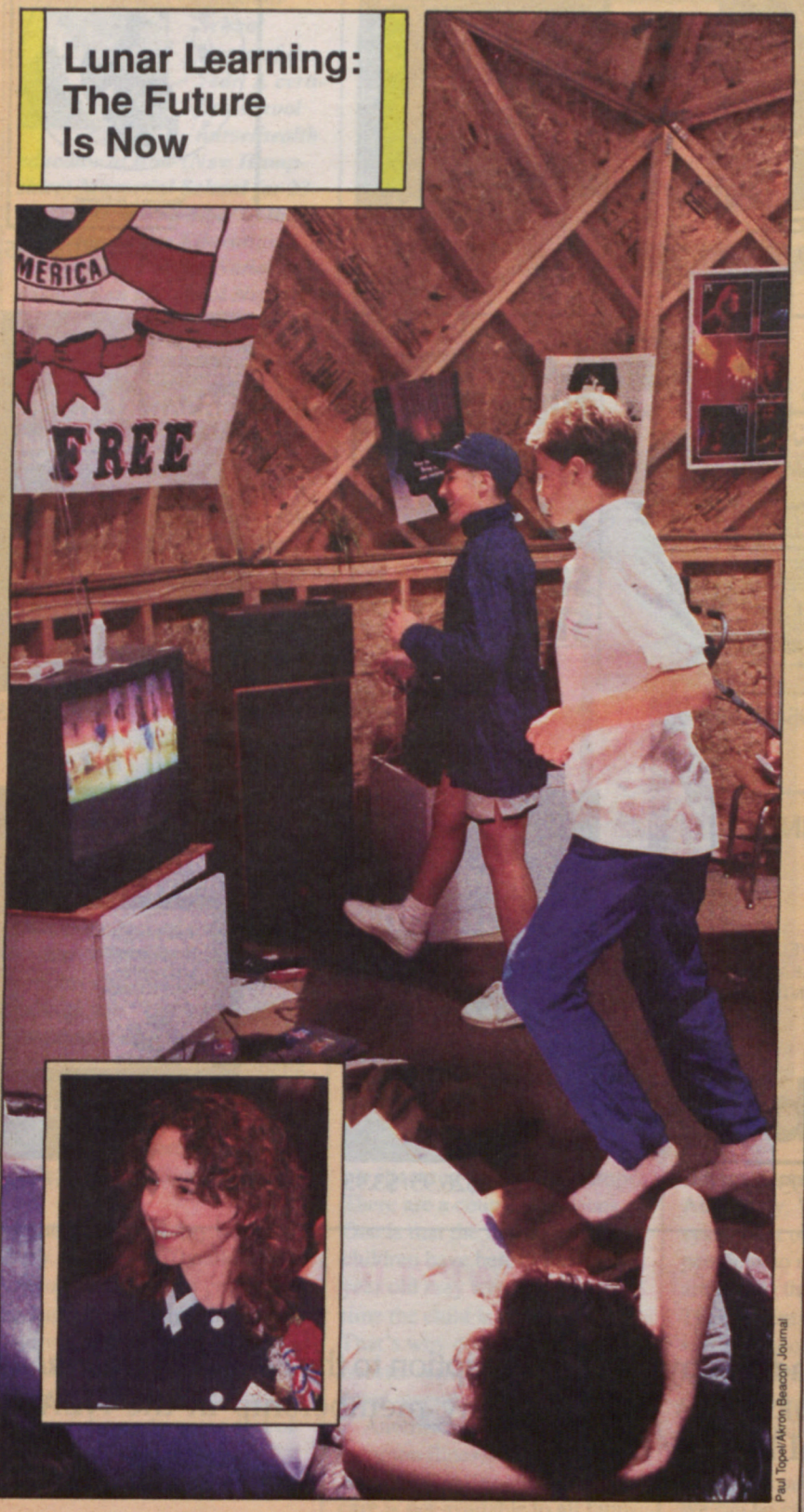
Retired junior high social studies teacher **Lyle Hanson** is developing lakefront property near Jamestown, North Dakota. So far, he's erected over 100 prefab, natural wood homes—all with spectacular views of Spiritwood Lake.

The families moving in—bluebirds, wrens, and wood ducks—are desperate for quality housing. The trees they normally nest in have been cut down for firewood.

"I guess I believe that if you take something from nature, you should put something back," says Hanson, a wildlife enthusiast, hunting guide, and, for the past dozen years, North Dakota state legislator.

It was Hanson who, in 1987, sponsored the bill that allows North Dakota citizens to donate state income tax refunds to a fund for protecting non-game wildlife. A $500 grant from the fund, plus help from colleague Mike Propeck's eighth grade woodworking students, made the birdhouses possible.

Lunar Learning: The Future Is Now



Paul Topel/Akron Beacon Journal

At least it is in Copley, Ohio, where 84 students spent a week last spring living, studying, and conducting experiments inside a fully-equipped moonbase. One solid connection to the present: the students didn't leave the ground.

The $3 million moon station was the heart of "Moonbase America," a science project headed by Copley High School physics teacher **Carol Staudt**. Staudt spent the last two years raising money and donations for the project.

"We wanted students to experience firsthand the excitement of scientific exploration," explains Staudt. "What better way than to go to the moon?"

The students spent the week enclosed in a cluster of geodesic domes connected by walkways. The moonbase, co-designed by NASA, included a control center as well as a fish hatchery, robotics room, commissary, and dorm rooms.

Eighteen schools around the nation kept tabs on the crew by satellite television. U.S. Senator and former astronaut John Glenn toured the facility.

But the students were never far from their earthly duties. Their teachers regularly faxed in their homework assignments and exams.

Doing Well in Hungary

Last spring, second grade teacher **Jackie Kuhn** of Pennsylvania's Forest Area School District spent a couple of weeks teaching wellness concepts, but not in her own district.

Kuhn took her knowledge of wellness on the road to Szeged, Hungary. With her, also teaching wellness, were two high school juniors and a sophomore.

The travelers from this rural district near Erie were returning a month's visit last fall from three students and a teacher from Szeged who helped out in a student assistance program.

In turn, Kuhn and the students visited six schools in southern Hungary near the Yugoslav border. They taught infant care in an eighth grade class, nutrition in a kindergarten—a whole range of wellness topics and levels. Everywhere, Kuhn says, they were greeted enthusiastically.

"Many school heads told me they desperately want U.S. teachers to come for a year and teach—any subject—in English," Kuhn reports. "They want very much to know more about us and our methods."

Andrew Rafkind

Good Fortune Smiles on Idaho Sisters

Margaret Dodson (left) thought she was fortunate when she won a $27,000 scholarship a few months back. Dodson teaches English at Borah High School in Boise. This year she's working on a year-long study of the Old West with the money she received as one of 49 National Endowment for the Humanities/Reader's Digest Teacher-Scholars.

"Our forebears came West to conquer the wilderness and save 'heathens,'" she says. "Now we want to save the wilderness and encourage Indian civilizations.

"I'm interested in discovering how Western writers reconcile the frontier mentality with the growing demand for preservation of the wilderness."

Dodson's sister, **Lucy Leavell**, a reading specialist at Boise's Lowell Elementary, thinks *she's* lucky, too. She and her husband recently bought five tickets in the Super Lotto (played by people whose states don't have lotteries). One of the tickets had all six winning numbers.

The Leavells won a third of a $22 million payoff—roughly $7 million. Each year for 20 years, the family will receive about $360,000.

Not bad for an elementary school teacher—who, by the way, has no immediate plans to leave the profession.

"Reading specialists are very much needed," says Leavell. "And I don't want to set a bad example for my students.

"I tell them not to plan on a lottery win or a whim of nature to fulfill their dreams. Education—not chance—is the only answer."

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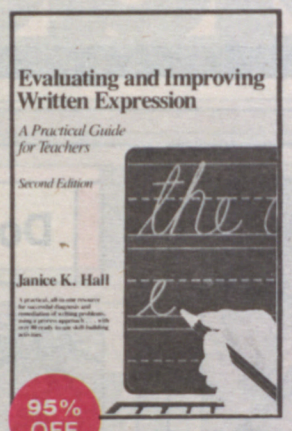

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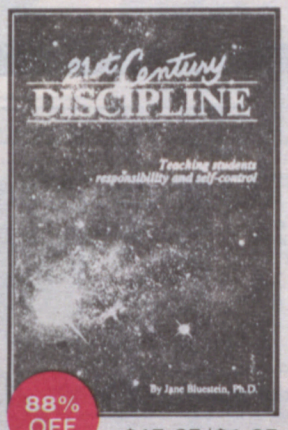

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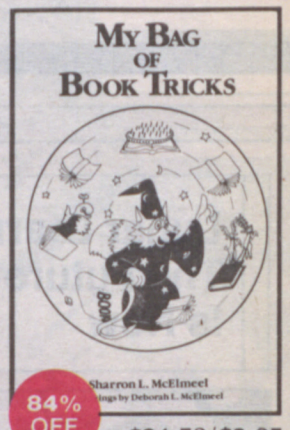

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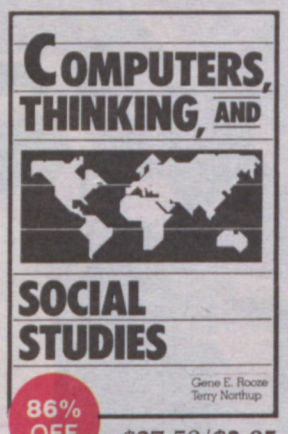

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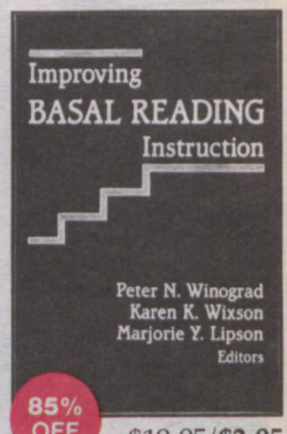

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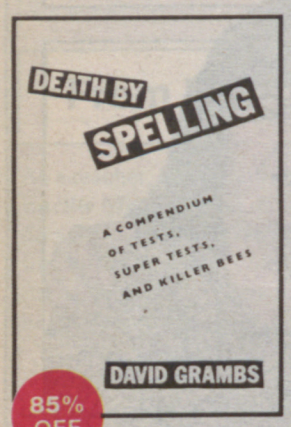

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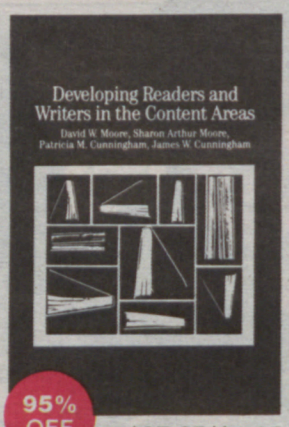
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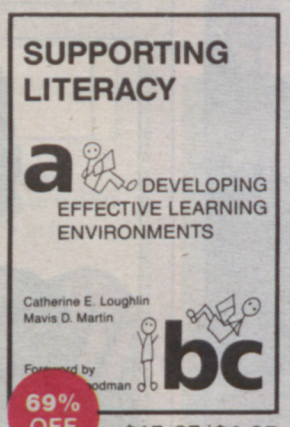

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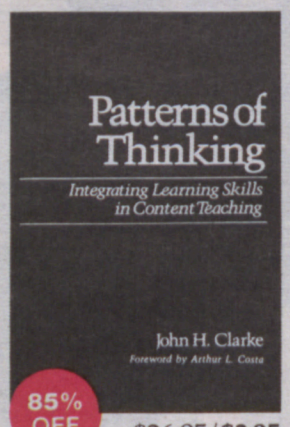

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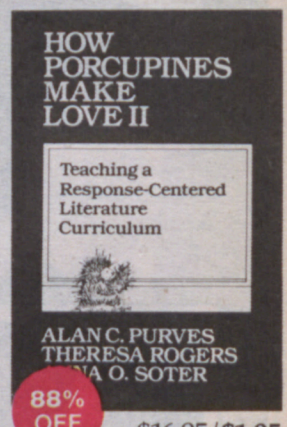

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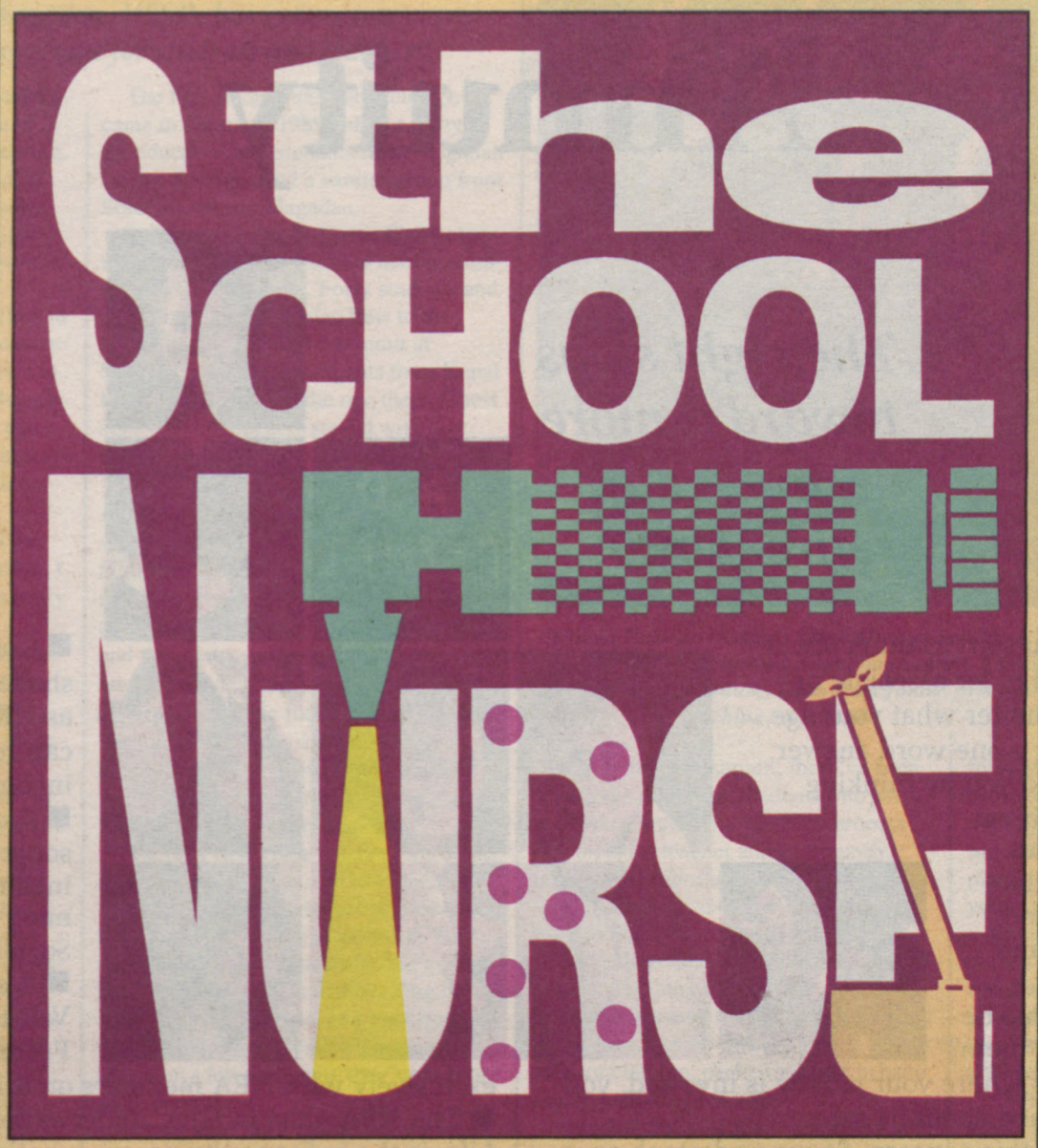
Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn.

Barbara Ward is the 1991 National School Nurse of the Year. A certified school nurse/health educator at Bow (New Hampshire) Memorial School for 23 years, she is a member of the New Hampshire Education Association and the National Association of School Nurses.



How would you describe the role of the school nurse?
We actually have two roles—as nurses and as health educators. As nurses, we're in the school to improve and protect children's health status by identifying and helping remove health-related barriers to learning.

We provide health services—screening, counseling and referrals, and assist with physicals. We administer medication, provide care in an emergency, and work on special education teams.

As health educators, we're valuable resources on interdisciplinary teams.

What pressures do you face?
Besides the inherent stress of the job and the lack of time, we're dealing with more medically complex children now—for instance, the "crack babies" who are entering schools. Ten percent of children have asthma severe enough to require ongoing treatment. One in four comes from a home where there may be abuse or drug addiction.

What's a typical day for you?
Busy. We have 430 middle school students from grades 5 through 9. I do screening, assess injuries and illnesses, and participate in a health education program that fully integrates my services. I spend a great deal of my time on documentation.

What are school nurses' greatest concerns?
We want to see a healthier nation, but as economic pressures increase, we've seen programs cut back and caseloads increase.

We've also seen a resurgence in preventable diseases because many youngsters aren't getting immunized. It's ironic: just when we face greater demands, we're cutting back on the services that would make a difference.

What health problems are most common for students?
We're seeing a rise in preventable illnesses—measles, mumps. There are a couple of reasons. One is that the immunizations children have before they're a year old may wear off by the time the child is a teenager. That's why our state requires a booster series before students enter seventh grade.

Another reason for the rise in common illnesses is the health care crisis. Affordable medical care is not available to all families. That's got to change.

What about student behavior?
Students are using drugs less, but they haven't cut down on alcohol or tobacco use, and we continue to worry about HIV infection and AIDS. We have to find the magic link that makes our lessons real for these children.

The presence of responsible adults in the lives of these youngsters is crucial, and that means parents, school nurses, and teachers.

Has the nation's health care crisis affected school nurses?
Absolutely. We see a health care system out of touch with the people who need it. Youngsters are falling through the cracks. Their parents are among the working poor who can't afford health insurance. For such kids, school nurses have become the person families turn to.

What can school nurses do?
We can be catalysts for our communities and our nation. We can initiate, find information, get our communities involved.

In New Hampshire, school nurses are already involved in the upcoming presidential campaign. We've been asked by a health coalition to raise some of the tougher questions during a presidential candidate forum.

What kind of questions?
Suppose a child gets hurt and needs to see a doctor today. As a school nurse I can't make a medical diagnosis and prescribe treatment. I call the parents, but they don't have insurance. They may resort to home remedies or wait until they have to take the child to the emergency room. This is what happens in a health crisis. What would the candidate do about it?

We want to make sure all students get the health care they need. It shouldn't depend on where they live or whether their parents can afford insurance.

What do you want to see in a school health program?
A good program includes good quality health services, a comprehensive health education curriculum, and a healthy school environment.

The first item means there should be proper screening services for detection of scoliosis, and analysis of a student's growth and development. In some areas that means setting up school-based health clinics.

There should also be a proper ratio of students to nurses. The National Association of School Nurses recommends no more than 750 students per nurse—here in New Hampshire we have 450 students per nurse.

School nurses can incorporate teaching in their daily services. Students need to learn to be good health consumers and be skilled at taking care of themselves.

The school nurse can also be involved as a team teacher. For example, I go into the seventh grade class and show students how to graph height and weight.

As for a healthier school environment, school nurses are helping monitor any signs of "sick buildings," accident trends in the district, anything that would endanger students' health.

You got your school's lunch program changed. Why?
Students weren't using the hot lunch program the way they should. We needed educational materials, so I wrote a grant that involved teachers, cafeteria staff, even a student committee in revamping the lunch program.

Now, we have a wonderful salad bar—and students are using it.

Do you work with local agencies?
Yes. Our ninth-grade health program talks about head injuries, and we get physical therapists from a nearby rehabilitation center to help with that class.

This program is important because the age group 15 to 25 has the highest incidence of head injuries—many caused by alcohol or drug use.

We show teens what can happen in accidents. The therapists describe the difficult—and painful—rehabilitation process. They also introduce a patient who talks to the students.

Do you think school support staff should, say, dispense medicine when a nurse isn't available?
The school nurse has the training to perform those duties. In New Hampshire, the school nurse is the only one who can legally administer medication. But a person appointed by the principal may "oversee" the child taking their own medication.

The NASN strongly recommends that school nurses be available to provide these services.

Where can schools get more information?
Write The National Association of School Nurses, Inc., P.O. Box 1300, Scarborough, ME 04070-1300.

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INTERNATIONAL

Building Bridges Over the Bering Sea

In just four years, a single pen pal project between Alaskan sixth graders and students in Magadan, USSR, has grown into international exchange programs for students and teachers.

For students and teachers in Alaska's Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, *glasnost* has a personal meaning. Ever since the Soviet Union opened its doors to the Western world a few years ago, these folks have had on-going personal and professional relationships with counterparts in Magadan, USSR.

It all started when a sixth grade class in the Kenai district's Soldotna Elementary School wanted to learn about a region in the Soviet Union that was geographically similar to their own. They decided that corresponding with students living in such an area would be a good way to achieve that aim.

With the help of an international pen pal organization, the kids contacted No. 1 School in Magadan, where students study English from fourth grade on.

Magadan is a city of 160,000, located 2,000 miles across the Bering Sea from the Kenai Peninsula. It's in Magadan Oblast, Soviet Far East, a territory about two-thirds the size of Alaska.

"The writing exchange started just as the USSR was beginning to open its doors to the Western world," explains Betty Leonard, Association member and then elementary education director for the Kenai district. Soon the previously "closed" city of Magadan became physically accessible to Americans.

Teacher Larry Rockwell—whose class initiated the writing project—and Kenai Peninsula bilingual director Rick Matiya—who helped with the writing project as a volunteer—got permission from the Russian government for three Kenai teachers and three students to fly to Magadan to set up a teacher/student exchange program.

The first student/teacher exchange came in February 1989, when a party of six educators and students from Magadan visited Soldotna and a similar group from Soldotna visited Magadan.

In January 1990, Soldotna Elementary and Magadan's No. 1 school held simultaneous youth summits. Forty students and educators from Magadan flew to the Kenai Peninsula for the summit at Soldotna, and 40 participants from Kenai flew to Magadan for the one there. Guest students and teachers stayed with host families.

At Soldotna, high school Russian clubs sponsored a pot luck supper. The junior high jazz band performed. Students participated in workshops on environmental and social concerns, lifestyles of Soviet and American youth, and youth involvement in the development of a global community for the future. There was a session for all the visitors on common heritage and geography. And visits to local sites, including nearby Nikolaevsk Village, a Russian community.

Soldotna first grade teacher Pam Jonas describes Nikolaevsk: "The village was founded 20 years ago by people who came from Russia to escape persecution. Today, it's a tightly knit community that's maintained its old customs and has long been suspicious of Russians. But ever since its residents met three teachers from Magadan a few years ago, they've become more open."

In Magadan, the highlight of the summit came when the Kenai delegation presented its hosts with a computer and modem, connecting students at Soldotna Elementary and Magadan School No. 1.

Roy Shapley

Pam Jonas

Above: Russian students show Alaskan educator Betty Leonard around Magadan. Inset photo: Larisa Kodorova, head of the English department at Magadan Pedagogical Institute, visits Pam Jonas' first grade classroom, while in Soldotna, Alaska, on a teaching exchange.

Since that first summit, there've been two more exchanges. Students who participate must undergo a selection process that includes teacher and community recommendations and questions about how they plan to use knowledge gained from their trip.

The kids get many hours of preparation—everything from classes in Soviet history to learning the wisdom of packing light (three laps around the gym in winter outdoor clothing, packed suitcase in hand, usually convinces them).

This fall, a Kenai district high school graduate is working and studying at a school in Magadan. Two Magadan students are attending Soldotna High for a year. And Soldotna High has a teacher from Magadan teaching Russian—interestingly, he was hired as a regular teacher, not as part of an exchange program. Individual schools in both districts are planning further exchanges and another youth summit.

Perhaps the most amazing outcome of this project is an unofficial one. Educators and students and their families have formed emotional ties to the people they've met through the exchanges—and are keeping those friendships active.

"When I was in Magadan this summer," says Betty Leonard, "it was like old home week. Everywhere I went, I ran into folks from the Kenai area, spending their vacations visiting Russian friends."

—Diane Dismuke

Curriculum With a Conscience

A Salt Lake City sixth grade teacher wants her students to join the effort to end world hunger by the year 2000. Here's how she's doing it.

Penny Archibald-Stone's sixth grade students at Bennion Elementary School don't buy some of the commonly held beliefs about global hunger.

They've learned that world hunger is not the result of a lack of food. Nor does hunger stem from famine and disaster that people can't control. They also know now that 40,000 children need not die from hunger each day.

Salt Lake City students set up an exchange program with their counterparts at Mariano Escobedo school in Agua Prieta, Mexico.

And they're writing their government leaders and others to remind them of their promisies to reduce hunger and care for children. Those promises were made last year when more than 70 world leaders attended the World Summit for Children held in New York City.

Stone's interest in fighting world hunger comes from her four years of work for the Hunger Project, an organization dedicated to educating the public on the potential for ending world hunger.

Her students' involvement in the Hunger Project is not a passing fancy. Last year, for instance, her students joined the one million people from all over the world who participated in candlelight vigils as part of the World Summit for Children.

Their enthusiasm took them to the state capitol where they persuaded Governor Norman Bangerter to sign a proclamation recognizing the World Summit vigil. They also held a news conference to go on record urging the 70 heads of state who attended the summit to put children at the top of the world's political, economic, and social agenda.

At the summit, the leaders made ambitious promises to try to drastically reduce child deaths by the year 2000. Other goals include ensuring that 80 percent of children complete primary education and reducing child malnutrition by half in this decade.

Since the summit, 29 additional heads of state have promised to work toward these goals. NEA is a member of the coalition that's now working to make sure these promises are kept. Among the other coalition groups: American Academy of Pediatrics and the Boy Scouts.

This month, Stone will be coordinating "Keeping the Promise" school activities through a week-long lesson plan developed by Results, an international grassroots citizens lobby dedicated to ending hunger and poverty.

"Some people think a unit on world hunger and poverty is taking time away from the core curriculum," says Stone. "That's not true. We use the lesson plan to *teach* the core curriculum. "With this unit, students work harder because they're motivated by a commitment to end world hunger by the year 2000."

—Victoria Lytle

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Saving: The Painless Way

Experts say most of the obstacles to good financial planning are psychological rather than financial. Those we can do without.

People who complain that they "just can't save a penny" usually mean that saving doesn't appeal to them as much as spending. For these people, budgeting has all the glamour of a slow-weight-loss diet. Both represent deprivation in the interest of a faraway goal.

But that doesn't have to be the case. You can design games for yourself to get the same psychological boost from squirreling money away as you do now from buying something. Here's how.

► *Pay yourself first.* Take money off the top of your check for savings. If possible, have it deducted from your pay and deposited in your credit union or a bank savings account. Think about how much you feel you can afford to save, then add 15 percent for good measure. Look at managing on what's left as a challenge.

If payroll deduction isn't an option, consider asking your bank—or a mutual fund company—to deduct a specific amount from your checking account each month.

Another twist: use the savings plans some credit card companies have begun to offer. They bill you an extra $50 or $100 a month, or whatever you request. When you pay the bill, the extra money goes into an interest-bearing account.

Whatever you have to do to get started is fine. For example, some spendthrift clients of Esther Berger, a Paine Webber investment house vice president in Beverly Hills, write a check to her each month to deposit in a money market account for them.

Carol Caruthers, partner in charge of personal financial services at Price Waterhouse in St. Louis, goes at it from another direction.

She puts her full paycheck into a money market account earmarked for savings, then transfers just what's necessary to pay her share of the family bills into the joint checking account she shares with her husband. When her money market balance reaches a certain level, she invests it in a mutual fund.

► *Dump "found money" directly into your savings account.* When you receive a reimbursement check for work expenses or an insurance benefit check, or birthday or holiday money, stash it away before it disappears.

► *Pay off all credit card bills.* Promise yourself not to charge more than you can pay in one month. About 65 percent of people who carry credit cards "revolve" their accounts or carry balances—that's up from 50 percent five years ago.

Don't be one of them. With bank interest rates below 6 percent, carrying credit card debt at 18 to 20 percent is foolish, particularly since the interest is no longer tax deductible.

► *Pay an extra $50 a month on the mortgage to build up equity in your home faster.* Consider this: If you have a $75,000, 30-year mortgage at 10 percent, you can save $34,000 in interest and reduce the loan by five years simply by paying an additional $25 each month.

► *Find out where you're spending your money.* An excellent way to do this is with a computerized check-writing program that will sort your cash income and outflow into categories and total them, as well as print your checks and keep your checkbook. Once you see where your money is going, you can make some choices about it.

If you can manage to regularly set aside some money in a savings account and get a handle on your annual budget, you'll have a good financial foundation. Then you'll be ready to evaluate insurance needs and investment strategies to help your money grow.

—Mary Rowland

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With the support of concerned individuals, teacher associations and many other groups interested in education, we're establishing high standards for teachers and teaching.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Look Before You Leap!

Pension portability for educational workers is a high-profile issue—and remains a high priority for NEA.

The typical state retirement plan was designed to reward a lifetime of continuous service. But educational workers, the most mobile of public employees, often find their pensions suffer when they move to another state.

One economist estimates that a vested employee who moves twice after age 30 will receive only 57 percent of the pension of a stable employee, all other things being equal.

All states run "defined benefit" education employee pension plans that base benefits on a formula: years of service times Final Average Salary (FAS), times a percentage factor that reflects employee and employer contributions.

But when those years are worked in different states, two and two can add up to make less than four.

For example, a study by the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy found that—given identical plans and full vesting after five years—an employee who puts in 30 years of service in one such plan and five years in another, will receive 19 percent less in benefits than one who stays put for 35 years.

As a result, there's a built-in incentive for those with many years of service in one system to stay put.

Of course, no two public pension plans are identical. Sometimes it makes financial sense to switch. Figuring how a move will affect your finances means looking at factors like:

Vesting. Being "vested" means you have the right to your pension from your state retirement system, even if you move out of state. Employees who leave a job prior to being vested are entitled only to their own and not their employer's contributions to the plan.

Vesting periods in state retirement systems vary from immediate (Wisconsin) to ten years. Some states require a combination of years of age and years of service before an employee is vested.

Are you vested now? Could you work long enough to be vested in your new plan? For those nearing retirement, a year or two in a different plan could make a huge impact on their final retirement income.

Remember: even if you are vested, your FAS stops growing and inflation starts eroding future benefits when you leave a plan. Many states average your highest three years to determine your FAS.

Since your last years are almost always your highest paid years, and since your FAS is multiplied by your years of service, you can easily lose money in the long run by jumping to a higher paying job in another state shortly before retirement.

Buy-ins. Thirty-eight states currently allow employees to purchase retirement credits for the number of years they've taught in public schools in other states.

Some states also sell credits for federal, state, and local government employment; military service; educational leave; college and university teaching; and private school experience.

In theory, buy-ins allow employees to compensate for the disadvantages of switching pension plans. In fact, buy-ins are complex —and— expensive.

In many states you must pay both the employee's and employer's contributions plus interest, and in one lump sum. The number of years you can purchase may be limited, and some plans make you give up your old pension.

Another hitch—some plans don't even allow buy-ins until after as many as ten years of service, or may base the cost on your age and salary at the time of the purchase request.

On the plus side, a few states allow you to begin purchasing service credits immediately, and offer a monthly payment option. Others allow purchased credits to be applied towards vesting.

Social Security. The one retirement system in the U.S. that is fully portable is Social Security. It's not only a pension plan: It provides often-overlooked health, disability, and life insurance.

For example, the face value of Social Security life insurance alone is over $7 trillion—about the same as the total of private life insurance. For those nearing retirement, Medicare Part A eligibility is an especially attractive feature of Social Security.

But twelve states don't let teachers take part in Social Security; seven don't let any educational employee participate.

If you're moving to a non-Social Security state, it is possible to continue to earn Social Security credits by working a second job or running a home-based business such as tutoring. Since many Social Security benefits are earnings-related, however, you probably will experience some drop in coverage.

Getting Help. Understanding the ramifications of switching retirement systems is rarely a do-it-yourself job, especially if you're considering a buy-in. Your financial planner, tax adviser, or accountant may be helpful, especially if he or she has other state employees as clients.

Your local Social Security office can explain the effects of moving from a Social Security to a non-Social Security state—or vice versa—on your coverage.

A few state and local Associations have full-time staff members available to counsel individuals or groups of members about their state's pension plan. Many more have someone who knows the system and can answer specific questions.

Fellow members are also a good resource. Most schools have a "guru" or two who know the system, perhaps through experience on a bargaining team. (But you'd better find out whether your state has a two-tiered system that treats old and new hires differently.)

Finally, consult your local NEA-Retired chapter. Some chapters organize "mentor programs" that allow retirees to share their knowledge and experience.

For more information, write to NEA-Retired, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

JOIN NEA-RETIRED

Membership in NEA-R isn't limited to retired education employees; active employees can join, too. Dues are $10 a year. Lifetime membership is available for $100.

In 41 states, membership in NEA-R and the state Retired affiliate are unified. For more information, contact your state affiliate or write to NEA-Retired, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

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Peter A. Barrett, Editor

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LEGAL TIMES

School Financing: Unsteady Progress

Since 1989, courts in five states have declared state school financing systems unconstitutional; similar litigation is pending in 11 other states.

Why the spate of school finance cases?

The answer lies with the way education is paid for. Typically, a large share of school funds come from the local property tax. The property tax rate is set by the local school board.

Property-rich school districts can raise large amounts of revenues even with low tax rates. Property-poor districts, on the other hand, must "tax high merely to spend low," as the Texas Supreme Court recently observed.

Such a funding system can result in grossly disproportionate expenditures for public schooling within a state. In Texas in 1989, for example, the poorest school district spent $2,112 per pupil, while the richest spent $19,333.

Advocates for poor school districts initially turned to the federal courts, arguing that unequal education financing systems violate the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Those efforts were dealt a severe setback in 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court, by a 5-4 margin, ruled in *San Antonio Independent School District v. Rodriguez* that unequal education funding does not violate the U.S. Constitution because education is not a "fundamental right protected by the Constitution."

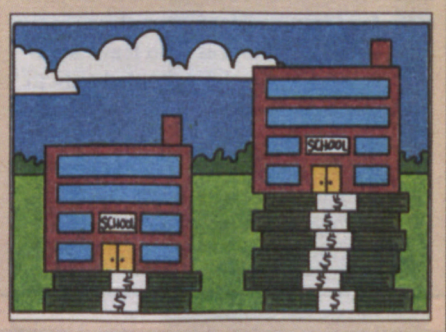
Undaunted, lawyers then sued in state courts around the country claiming that unequal education funding violates various clauses contained in most state constitutions requiring the state to provide a "thorough," "uniform," "efficient," "free," and/or "adequate" system of public schools.

The results of these lawsuits have been mixed. Courts in half of the 22 states where the issue has been litigated since *Rodriguez* declared that their school funding systems violate the state constitution.

Even with a favorable court ruling, however, the battle is only half won. Rather than order a specific remedy, courts typically will direct the state legislature to formulate a new school funding scheme that will result in equal educational opportunity.

Legislative responses vary, but most do involve an increase in education funding, plus other reforms.

Last year, for example, after the Kentucky Supreme Court invalidated that state's school financing structure, lawmakers raised $1.3 billion in new taxes. A portion of the money was earmarked for preschool and after-school programs for at-risk students, site-based decision making, maximum class sizes, and special professional development programs for teachers.



NEA can provide assistance to those state affiliates interested in pursuing a lawsuit against inequity in school finance.

The NEA Office of General Counsel maintains an equal education finance litigation file that contains court decisions, legal analyses, briefs and sample complaints.

NEA Research maintains contact with school finance experts, collects state-level education funding data, and provides information on the 50 states' fiscal policies and tax actions (although the data necessary to support school finance litigation are available only from state sources). Research staff also are available for consultation with state affiliates.

Under the Kate Frank/DuShane Unified Legal Services Program, NEA will reimburse state affiliates 42 percent of the amount expended for legal fees and research services in connection with school finance litigation, subject to certain conditions.

—Michael Simpson
NEA Office of General Counsel

When we are very young, we are possessors of a splendid gift: a mind that knows no limits.

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Looking Back

An update on stories from previous issues.

Andrew Rafkind

Keeping a Good Thing Going

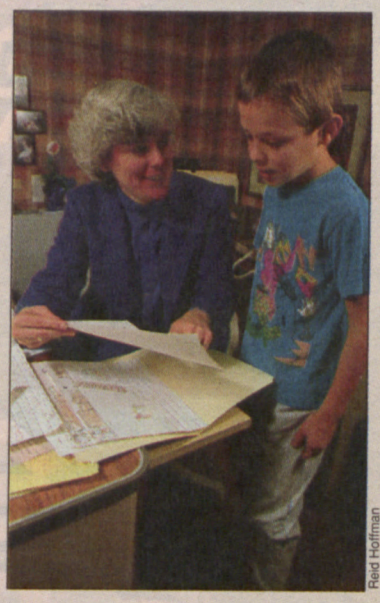
The idea was simple: reach at-risk kids *before* they drop out. And with that guiding principle, the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education moved against student dropout.

NFIE, NEA's nonprofit education foundation, started its dropout prevention drive five years ago with just five projects. Each year NFIE has added to the original group. Today, there are 73 dropout prevention projects operating.

Projects range from helping parenting teenagers see their way through graduation to fostering self-esteem, good nutrition, and parental involvement.

Today, initial NFIE funding for the original dropout prevention projects has expired, but 87 percent of those early pioneers are still going strong. All are continuing to find businesses and organizations willing to contribute to a wide range of dropout prevention activities.

The Boise (Idaho) Teen Parents' program (photo at left) even received the gift of child care services for its students.



Reid Hoffman

Principal Deborah Johnson leads West Ridge School into its second year of operation. The Greece, N.Y., school district, where West Ridge is located, is an NEA Learning Lab site.

First-Year Report: 'It's New, It Works'

It's been a year of risks and rewards for staff and students at West Ridge Elementary School in Greece, New York ("What Kind of Principal Do You Have?" February 1990).

Judging from comments to the press from students, faculty, and parents, the school's off to a great start.

West Ridge was started from scratch last September with teachers and students from all over the district. The Greece school district is the site of an NEA Learning Lab, a program that encourages district-wide reform projects.

"We learn here in a fun and different way," fifth grade student Erica Doran told reporter Linda Wertheimer, who wrote about the school's first year in the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*.

West Ridge parent Paulette Petix said learning seemed to flow in her son's classroom as teachers tied math, science, and other subjects together. Parents also praised the school's commitment to the innovative use of technology.

Throughout the school's first year, teachers, parents, students, and staff adjusted to the challenges of risk taking and shared decision making. School staff often worked a 60-hour work week, and parents took on new roles in school committees.

National Board Continues Push to Professionalism

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards ("Meeting of the Minds," March 1991) is continuing its work toward developing a national teacher certification system.

The Board recently awarded three contracts for research on the new types of assessments it plans to use to give teachers the chance to become nationally certified.

The Standards Board awarded the Educational Testing Service $393,000, The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development $343,333, and Jason Millman, a professor of education measurement and statistics at Cornell University, $67,000.

ETS will develop a "video portfolio" assessment of teaching. The Far West Laboratory will design performance-based exercises that will test teachers' knowledge and ability to work with diverse groups of students. And Millman will prepare a summary of current tests that assess teachers' knowledge of mathematics and their ability to teach the subject to students. The board will begin assessments in 1993-94.

NEA Today
COVER STORY
The Sky's the Limit
What if your district officially told you "the sky's the limit" on restructuring?
Would you be able to take your dreams for needed reforms and turn them into reality? NEA members in Pinellas County, Florida, one of the largest school districts in the U.S., have launched a bold experiment to do just that.

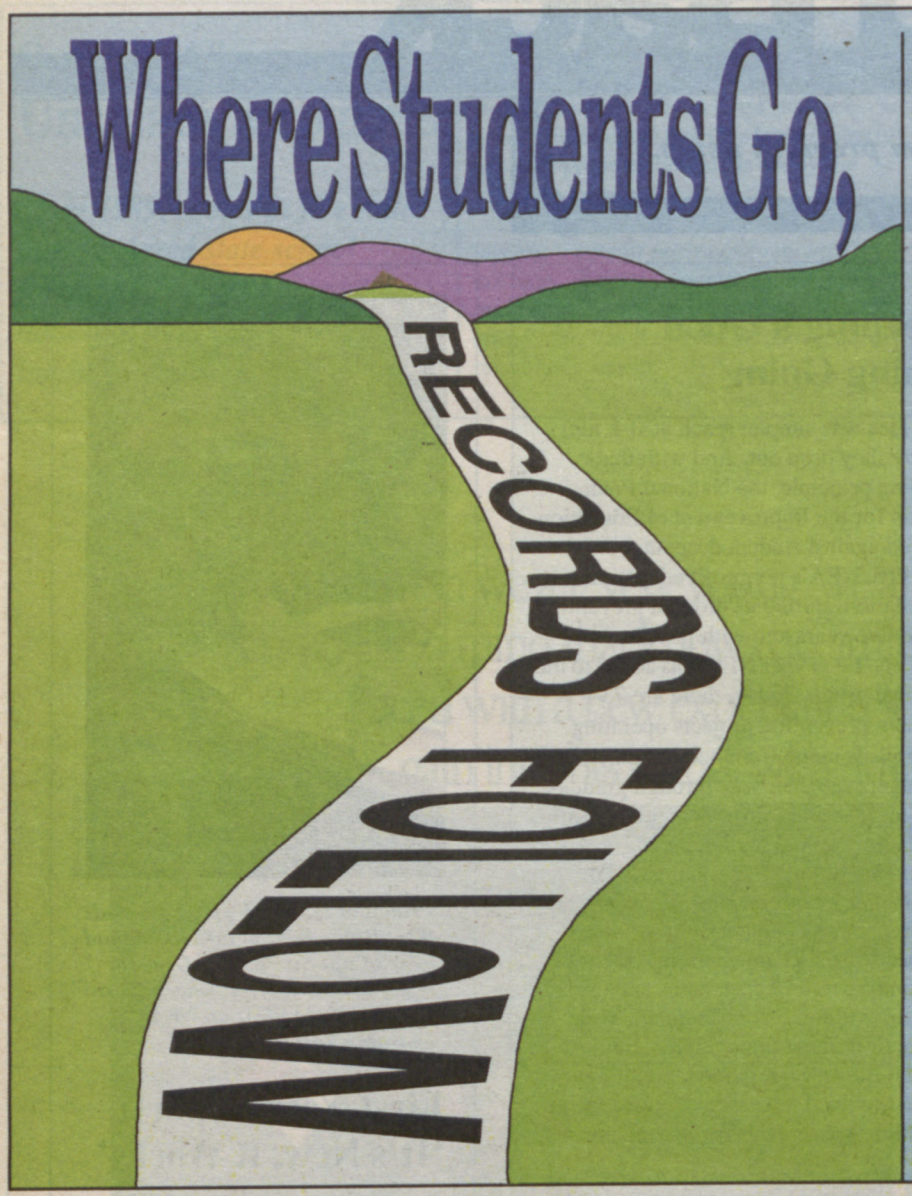
Pinellas Progress

In February, more than 50 teachers, parents, and administrators crowded into a three-hour workshop on parental involvement organized by the Pinellas County Learning Lab ("The Sky's the Limit," November 1990).

The gathering was the first of six evenings of training in the restructuring process. One teacher and one administrator from each school received training in such areas as building mutual trust, group facilitation, and site-based decision making. In April, at series' end, the participants received packets to help them apply what they'd learned. They returned to their schools as trainers.

Pinellas' restructuring training package lives on in a video that can be checked out by other school systems, including NEA Learning Lab sites. For information, write the Pinellas Classroom Teachers Association, 152 8th Ave., S.W., Largo, Florida 34640.

NEW WAVE



A new national records transfer system may help school districts and school staff get the information they need—at the touch of a keyboard.

A migrant student changes schools with the seasons; a truant student "falls off" school records, reappears at another school; a homeless student with special health needs moves to another school. How can school staff help without knowing the patterns of a student's life?

A new computer-based project funded by the National Center for Education Statistics may be a step in the right direction. Currently being piloted in five states—California, Florida, New York, Texas, and Washington—the system is known as EXPRESS (Exchange of Permanent Records Electronically for Students and Schools).

"We wanted to develop a fast and reliable way to transfer critical information," says Bob Friedman, EXPRESS project director. "That way, when a student walks into a particular school district and school, that school can immediately obtain information that would help in selecting the right programs and services."

The record system will not only include the student's academic and health status, but will also cover a student's participation in special programs such as dropout prevention programs, alternative education, special education, and experimental projects.

The electronic data system will be the first of its kind to serve all grade levels—pre-kindergarten through grade twelve—and will also include post-secondary schools, says Friedman.

"There's also the added security of transferring electronic data rather than using facsimile transmissions or mailing hard copy," adds Friedman.

Marcia Wicks, who directs Seminole County, Florida's, pilot EXPRESS system, says, "In the past, it could take as long as six weeks to obtain information about new students at our schools. By that time a student could be on to the next school or worse—failing. This system will make a difference."

Florida is already a leader in data interchange, with a statewide system linking the state's high schools, colleges, and universities.

Tom Milwee, a guidance counselor at Lake Brantley High School, wouldn't do without it. "I can send transcripts immediately, or check to see if a student has been accepted or needs more materials from our school. I can't wait to see what the next five years will bring."

"But with all technology, there's still the human factor," says project director Bob Friedman, "There have to be people who care enough not to let these students disappear from the system."

—Anita Merina

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For more information, contact **NEA Today** Education Marketplace, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036; 202/822–7207.

Your NEA

NEA CENTER:

New Look For Your National Headquarters

NEA Center has been renovated —inside out, top to bottom. But the building's purpose remains the same: to serve NEA members.

Not all the paint's dry, not every picture's hung, but some 450 Association staffers are back at NEA Center in their totally renovated offices located in the heart of Washington, D.C.

The $60 million renovation—underway for more than three years—was completed this month. The official dedication ceremony will be held October 10, the next regularly scheduled meeting of the NEA Board of Directors.

"We're excited about the new building," says NEA President Keith Geiger. "Not only does it meet our structural and technological needs, but the new building symbolizes NEA's commitment to be a leader in the education field."

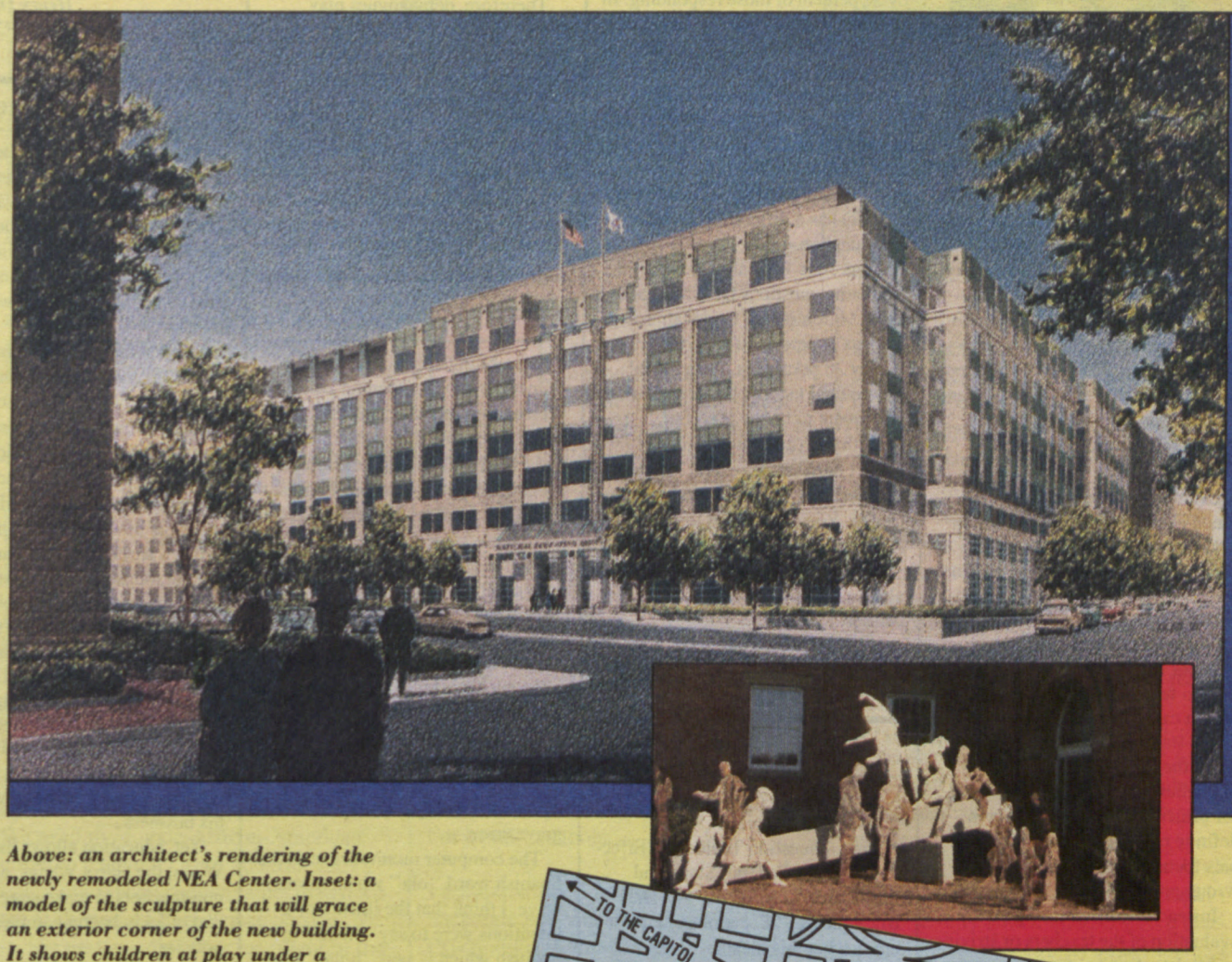
The "old" NEA building was last remodeled in 1957 and hadn't been significantly changed for 30 years. The building's foundation in places goes back to the 1920s.

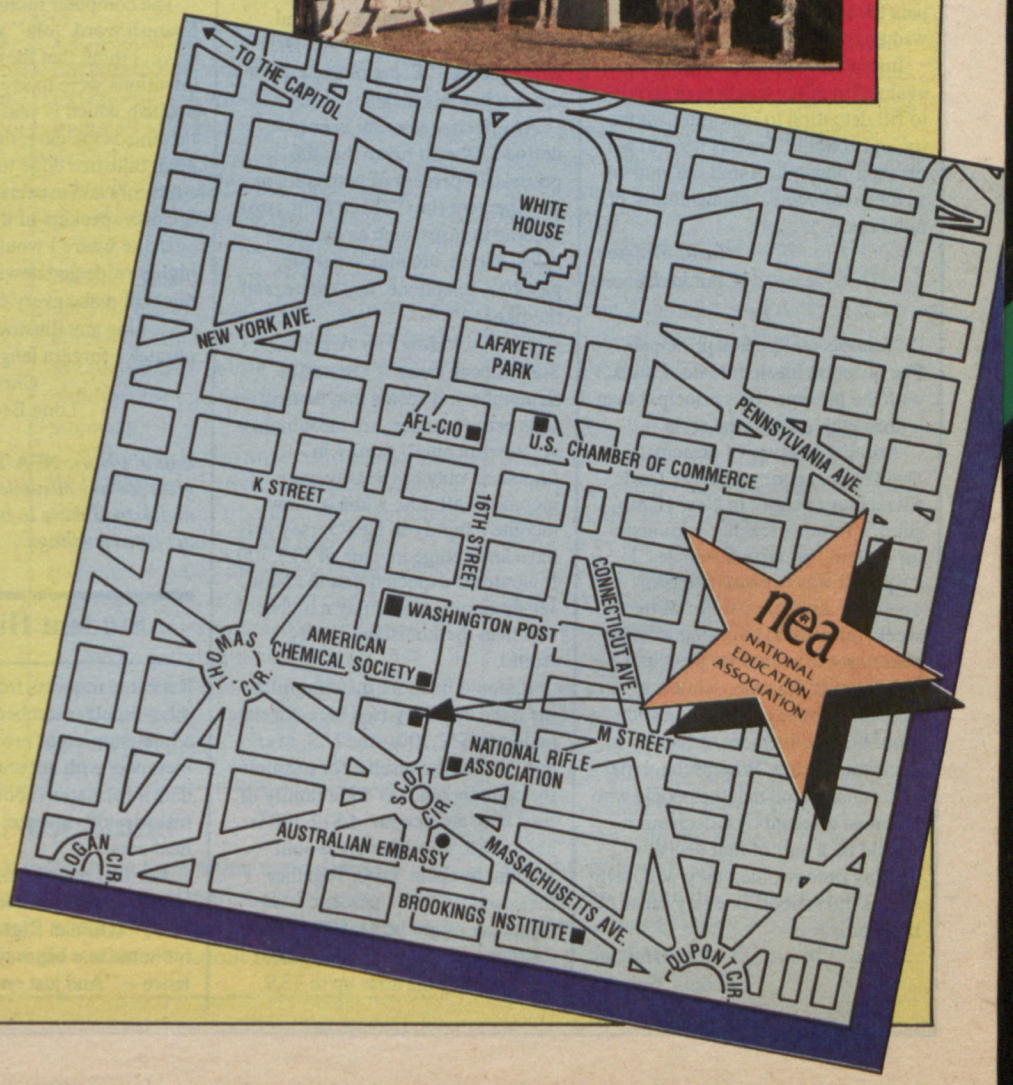
"The building had become unserviceable," says Executive Director Don Cameron, ticking off a host of problems. Among them: an inadequate and malfunctioning heating and cooling system, major roof leaks, an electrical system inadequate to NEA's growing technological needs, and more.

"We chose to capitalize on the building's structural assets—preserving the core and structure—as we updated and enhanced it," Cameron explains.

One key asset's been preserved: the building's prime location. Just five blocks from the White House, a block from the National Geographic, and around the corner from the *Washington Post*—NEA's still located at 1201 16th Street, where it's been since 1920.

But you might not recognize the new NEA Center. Instead of its former blue exterior, the renovated building is covered with green Burlington slate from England and grey limestone from Indiana.





Above: an architect's rendering of the newly remodeled NEA Center. Inset: a model of the sculpture that will grace an exterior corner of the new building. It shows children at play under a teacher's watchful eye and was designed by Columbus, Ohio, NEA member Ken Valimaki, an art teacher. Right: NEA Center in relation to other landmarks in the nation's capital.

Other changes that will bring NEA's headquarters into the 21st century include:

- a new state-of-the-art broadcast studio, which will allow NEA to use the latest technology to communicate with members and the general public.
- a new auditorium and a conference center with 22 meeting rooms that can accommodate large group meetings as well as smaller gatherings.
- a dramatic eight-story atrium—complete with 150-panel skylight—rising out of the center of the building.
- modular office furniture that's attractive, modern, and practical.
- a remodeled cafeteria large enough to provide daily meals for NEA staff, governance, and visitors who come to NEA Center for meetings and special events.

—Victoria Lytle

Letters

The Principal Principle

I'm a student who presently attends a high school in a small community in central Illinois. My mother is a teacher at the junior high. Last month, I read "Do Schools Really Need Principals?" (Debate, September). After seeing two totally different opinions from two teachers, I wanted to contribute a student's view on the issue.

Even though the high school I attend is located in a small community, the system—and its leaders, principals—deal with students in a very impersonal manner.

We're assigned student numbers. We go to school to learn and to be with our friends, but we're beginning to feel as if we're in a concentration camp—not a learning place. We're stamped, labeled, and sent on down the line.

I believe there's a definite need for principals, but their role is in definite need of refinement. Principals focus their attention on the wrong problems.

Instead of concentrating on the evaluation of the teachers or striving to fill detention to maximum capacity, our schools' leaders need to get off their power kick and see students as they really are—young adults, not numbers.

Tasha Walston
Clinton, Illinois

Do schools really need principals? The question has less to do, I think, with the presence of a principal than it does with managerial style.

Arguing in favor of principals, Dan Cherry reported that at Towle Elementary School in New Hampshire, a rotating teacher-administrator system had inconsistencies. I suspect it was because teachers opted for an administrator of the week, rather than choosing a Towle peer to serve as interim principal.

Whatever the case, schools of excellence have one thing in common: the involvement of faculty in decision making. When school managers understand that the people who are most affected by a decision should be a part of that decision-making process, then they will have successful schools in every sense of the word.

Ruby H. Clay
Lithonia, Georgia

Table Talk

I found "The Big Squeeze" (September) interesting, but I question one of your tables.

In Table 1, The Property Tax, you cite a 1989 national survey that shows the federal income tax as being perceived to be the least fair by 32 percent of those responding. In contrast, the same survey found only 18 percent saw the local property tax as the least fair.

I'm not familiar with the Economic Policy Institute, which is apparently one of your information sources. But the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations (ACIR) has a different reading on this question.

In its June 1990 annual survey (the same questions have been asked since March 1972), the local property tax is perceived to be the least fair by 28 percent of those polled. The federal income tax is viewed by 26 percent to be the least fair.

With the Tax Reform Act of 1986, I don't believe the federal income tax is seen as the most unfair tax any longer. You might wish to check the ACIR findings.

I enjoy reading *NEA Today*. It's always informative and I use it in my classes.

Thomas A. Carrere
Carrollton, Georgia

Taxed to the Limit

My letter has to do with numbers, statistics, and percents.

First, I question Table 10, "Effective Rates of Federal, State, and Local Taxes, 1966-1988" ("The Big Squeeze," September.) I don't know what this means.

An *effective tax rate* is not defined. Does it mean that the poorest 10 percent of taxpayers pay 16.4 percent (in 1988) of their gross income in taxes such as income, sales, excise, alcohol, cigarette, gasoline, telephone, real estate, and the like?

Also, in "How Fair Are Your State, Local Taxes?" (Stateside, September), it seems that comparisons between states are meaningless. A "low-income" family in Louisiana may have an average income of $9,500, while a "low-income" family in New Jersey may have an average income of $15,500. It would be expected that the New Jersey family would pay a higher rate than the Louisiana family would.

It would be more meaningful to me if the numbers used for each state had been $12,700—the U.S. average. In Massachusetts, for example, the state income tax for a family of four with an income of $12,700 is about $80. The sales tax would amount to about $100. Together these add up to 1.4 percent. Real estate tax might be $1,500, state gasoline tax might be $60, auto excise $24. This adds up to 13.9 percent.

What I'm driving at is that various charts picture Massachusetts as having the fifth highest per capita state and local taxes, but as 34th or 37th or 43rd in percent of state and local taxes per $1,000 income. None of these charts, including yours, explains adequately what actual taxes are collected.

Therefore, demagogues play games with tax numbers. I'm not entirely ignorant—I'm a retired math teacher, I understand statistics, and I help elderly people with their taxes. Yet I can find no accurate information on taxes paid and collected. Why?

Warren Himmelberger
Wellesley Hills, Massachusetts

Hello?

Being a bilingual teacher, I found "Opening Boxes, Opening Doors" (Personally Speaking, September) very interesting. This school year my school will be implementing a program targeting Limited English Proficient students. Within the program these students will have the chance to use computers purchased with grant monies.

However, it was not the article that spurred me to write this letter. The illustration that heads the article was very disturbing. Since the article was written by a bilingual teacher, I would automatically assume that the person responsible fgor the illustration of the article would be sensitive to the work. They did in fact make a grave error.

The computer monitor reveals the Spanish word "ola" which means wave. I think that the illustrator's intentions were to say "hello" in Spanish which is said "hola." If in fact this is the case, there has been a great injustice done to bilingual educators and especially the native Spanish speakers of this nation.

In the future I would hope a highly respected newspaper such as this will make every effort on reviewing any illustration that incorporates a foreign language.

Christian Miraglia
Long Beach, California

Editor's Note: NEA Today *apologizes for any misunderstanding. We understood there to be several accepted spellings.*

Student Histories

Repeated requests from myself and other faculty members, asking the administration to provide faculty members with accurate and up-to-date information about students with histories of violence, have fallen on deaf ears.

For that reason your article "Schools Confront Increasing Violence" (Human Rights, May/June) hit home in a big way. The sentence—"And just one state, California, requires schools to inform teachers about every student who has behaved violently"—could be classified as the best kept secret in town.

Please forward me a copy of the law, rule, regulation or whatever makes this statement a fact. I guarantee you that it will be waved in the face of several administrators until they do something about it.

Henry D. Lawshe
Los Angeles, California

Wise-enheimer

The appearance of Art Wise on the cover of *NEA Today* ("Teaching's Toughest Critic," April) was the last straw. School bashing is the media's number one sport in America, with daily coverage of newly-unearthed experts taking their turns with the paddle.

The last thing we need is NEA featuring a non-practitioner telling us what we need to do to solve the schools' problems. Doing so only compounds one of the major problems with our nation's schools: There are too many non-educators telling us how to run our show.

From parents to think-tank executives to industry to lobbyists to politicians, everybody knows what the problems is. NEA, it's time to tell these people that *they* are the problem.

I looked for any teaching credentials for Art Wise in the article. I found none. I'm sure that I can't go to Mr. Wise's office, walk in, and be listened to as I tell him how to run his business.

Yet, education allows that Art Wises, the Harry Wangs, and other non-teachers to make suggestions that quickly become implemented policies.

If these theoreticians have the answer, why aren't they in the classroom implementing their magic? Once again, non-practitioners are running the show. Those who don't play the game should not get to make the rules.

Schools are told that they are padded, inefficient, administratively top-heavy, and are harboring incompetents under tenure protection.

If better schools are to be achieved, it cannot be done by turning to non-teachers to do the implementing. It must be thought out, and those who will actually be entrusted with making it happen have to be consulted.

Telling the schools to cure society's ill, and then trashing the schools for not succeeding is out.

Allan Weissman
Ridgewood, New Jersey

A Dolphin Speaks

I took exception to the article, "How Strong is Your Insurance Company?" (Personally Speaking, April) written by financial writer Mary Rowland. It was very inaccurate and potentially dangerous.

I'm an insurance agent. Rowland's article attacked my profession and declared that I was a barracuda, ready to strike at the first sign of blood. It's funny, I've always described my industry as one of sharks and dolphins. Rowland implies we're all sharks.

I'm in one of the best businesses in the world. I get to help people plan their future and provide for their families if they don't make it home. I feel that if you're going to print articles on insurance and financial products, you should involve people who are a part of the industry.

You don't look for information on the quality of teachers from the state legislators, so don't ask critics for a one-dimensional view of insurance.

Rowland says Executive Life of California "weathered the storm and is now meeting all its obligations." But Executive Life folded a month after the article was written.

I'm not blaming you for the article. Many articles are incorrect for a simple reason: they aren't written by people who know.

Larry Gilmore
Everett, Washington

National Board Wants Your Help

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) is entering the research and development phase of its operations and seeks to work collaboratively with educators to develop the teacher assessments that will form the centerpiece of its voluntary, professional, certification system.

NBPTS has published *RFP #5*, which will identify school districts that wish to become partners with NBPTS in the development of its certification system. Districts selected to form the Field Test Network would evaluate innovative teacher assessment strategies, serve as test sites for the administration of the assessment system, and help consider the impact of the certification system.

In keeping with the Board's desire to collaborate with stakeholders, respondents to the RFP must indicate that the partnership is endorsed by at least the school board, the superintendent, and the teacher union.

For more information on how to become part of the NBPTS Field Test Network, contact Joan Baratz-Snowden at the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1320 18th St., N.W., Suite 401, Washington, DC 20036, 202/463-3980.

Debate

Should There Be Special Schools or Classes for Black Males?

YES

Richard Nowitz

Clarice Herberts teaches Spanish at Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore. She's been teaching for 13 years and is a long-time NEA activist. She serves on the Baltimore City Teachers Association Board of Directors.

The African-American male child leads the nation in every negative statistic related to education. Many African-American males drop out of school before completing their high school education. Many more are removed from schools by suspensions and expulsions. African-American males maintain the lowest grade-point average of any group, have the highest rate of student-teacher conflict, and are the least likely to go to college.

Unfortunately, society often ignores the positive accomplishments of African-American males because of historical patterns of racism and sexism.

These institutionalized patterns have effectively denied the African-American in general, and the African-American male in particular, access to this country's riches and opportunities.

Because the problems facing the African-American male have gone unchecked for so long and corrective actions have never been applied, we now face a crisis of epidemic proportions. Today's statistics represent a cry for help.

Cities like Baltimore are trying to answer that cry by developing all-male classes for African-American young men. These classes offer a way to bring more positive male role models into the daily lives of young Black men.

As the film *Boyz N the Hood* teaches, only a man can teach his son to be a man. Just as girls relate to other girls and women, boys relate to other boys and men.

A large number of African-American males are reared in single-parent, matriarch-based homes. That pattern is repeated in the classroom.

A boy without a father at home can become a positive, productive man. But certain "rites of passage" to that goal can only be set by other males. In some African tribes a young man leaves the village to learn lessons in life from other men. He returns only after he's learned the responsibilities of manhood.

This need for adult male instruction more than establishes the need to encourage African-American males to enter the teaching profession. I've taught students, both male and female, who've gone through grades 1-8 without ever being taught by an African-American male except the physical education teacher.

All-male classes would address the needs of young males without a father at home, giving them a positive male figure with whom they could identify.

I'm not saying that females are incapable of raising or teaching our young men, but I do see a need for both mothers and female teachers to raise their expectations for these young men and to recognize their different learning styles.

In order to develop pride and self-esteem, children need a historical perspective that will support their dreams. We need to provide African-American children teachings from an Afrocentric/multicultural perspective rather than from the exclusionary Eurocentric perspective.

The mass media bring the plight of the African-American male into our homes daily. The vast majority of the images of the African-American male are negative.

When a species is declared endangered, we isolate that species and mobilize all available resources to help that species survive.

Whether or not we choose to believe it, the African-American male is endangered. When it comes to education, we need to separate Black males and focus on them. For centuries, institutions isolated or separated white males as a way of producing a so-called superior product.

It's evident that the system isn't working. Why not try an alternative that has been tested and proven effective? If we're to keep our males from being declared "endangered," we must keep our minds open. I'll try whatever it takes to help our young men succeed in a system that has ignored their plight for too long.

NO

Richard Nowitz

Sharon Knox taught for five years in the Baltimore City Public Schools. For the last six years, she's been a school psychologist with the district. She's also a member of the Baltimore City Teachers Association Board of Directors.

Before more of these schools spring up, I'd like to investigate the success they claim to achieve. Is their success due to segregation and same-sex grouping, or is it really because the students are taught in smaller classes, by teachers especially recruited for their skills in strengthening psychosocial functioning, in schools with additional funding?

My problem with special classes and academies for African-American males is twofold.

First, I believe this is a dangerous return to the notion that students need to be segregated in order to get a quality education. It's as if we're returning to the conditions prior to the 1954 Supreme Court decision that outlawed "separate but equal" schools.

I believe there's no such thing as "separate but equal," and I'm not alone. Psychologist Kenneth Clark, a key figure in the 1954 decision, also raises concerns over the number of all-Black male schools and classes that are being proposed across the country.

At a time when we're talking about the need to "mainstream" children with disabilities, at a time when we're trying to emphasize inclusivity, people have begun to talk about singling out a group of children for special classes and special attention.

Although I'm sympathetic to the idea that children's individual needs should be addressed, I don't believe segregation is the answer, and I worry about the message it sends these youngsters. The message is that in order to excel, they need to be in segregated environments.

The underlying assumption is that Black males are inferior—that they can't learn unless they're secluded and given special privileges.

What the separation proposal doesn't do is address the flaws in the system and the way these children have been taught in the public schools.

Additional funding, special recruitment of Black male teachers, Afrocentric or multicultural curriculum, extracurricular activities, and self-esteem programs would benefit all students, not just Black male students.

Second, these classes and schools are segregated not only by race but also by gender. What does that say to female students, and in particular, Black female students?

Females in schools have historically faced discrimination. Now they'll feel it at an even earlier age as they watch boys attend special schools and receive special privileges.

One of the grant proposals for a center for Black males reads: "some contend that inner-city Black male children consciously or unconsciously reject females (and female teachers) as role models because women cannot provide appropriate examples of survival outside of home and school."

That's ridiculous. What about Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, Sojourner Truth, and Harriet Tubman? And will teaching Black male children in all-male schools change their negative attitudes about women?

I believe that individuals are sustained and nurtured in part by the community. The richer and broader the experiences of the child, the more adaptable a human being he or she becomes.

These children won't grow up in an all-Black, all-male world. Today's students grow up in a multicultural world. Our role is to give them what they need to excel in this world. To assume they must be sequestered in order to perform in the world is ridiculous.

The Civil Rights Act prohibits subjecting individuals to "segregation" or "separation" on the basis of race, color, national origin, or sex.

With the school desegregation question not settled in many cities, let's not return to the dangerous notion of separate but equal.

As Things Now Stand

Separate schools or classes for Black males have been either considered or established in New York, Milwaukee, Baltimore, the District of Columbia, San Diego, Chicago, and Atlanta. In Detroit, a federal judge recently ordered three specialized K-8 academies for Black male students to admit females.

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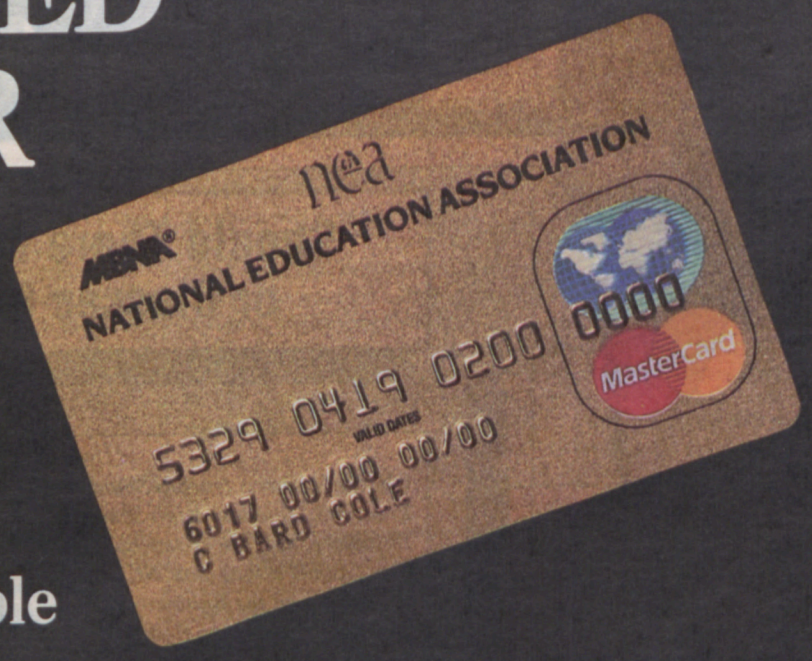

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